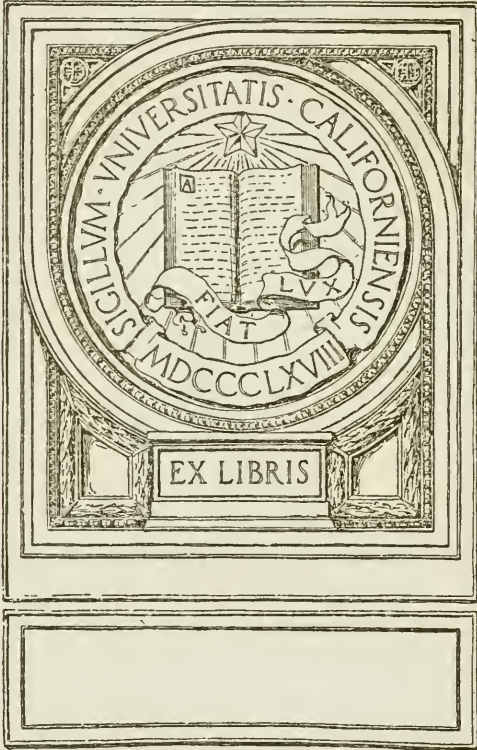


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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
AT LOS ANGELES











LIFE AND LABOUR  
OF THE  
PEOPLE IN LONDON





LIFE AND LABOUR  
OF THE  
PEOPLE IN LONDON

BY  
CHARLES BOOTH

ASSISTED BY

JESSE ARGYLE,      ERNEST AVES,      GEO. E. ARKELL  
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*Third Series : Religious Influences*



LONDON NORTH OF THE THAMES:  
THE INNER RING

London  
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED  
NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN CO.

1902

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G. Norman & Son, Printers, Floral Street, London

THE  
LONDON  
PRINTING  
AND  
FINISHING  
WORKS  
OF  
G. NORMAN & SON,  
PRINTERS,  
FLORAL STREET,  
LONDON.

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4088  
1886  
2013  
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LONDON NORTH OF THE THAMES :  
THE INNER RING

*Date of the Inquiry in this District : 1898*

TO THE READER

DURING the rather long period necessarily occupied in completing this work, various changes have taken place. Wherever possible, the more important of these have been indicated, but otherwise the facts have not been corrected to date of publication.



CHAPTER I  
WHITECHAPEL AND ST. GEORGE'S-IN-  
THE-EAST

§ 1

CHANGES

I HAVE now reached the point at which my study of London began fifteen years ago, and in this final review am able to note the changes that have taken place under my own observation, as well as those of earlier date recorded by some who have devoted themselves to religious, philanthropic or educational work in this district for twenty, thirty, forty or even, in one or two instances, for fifty years.

The whole district has been affected by the increase of the Jewish population. It has been like the slow rising of a flood. Street after street is occupied. Family follows family. No Gentile could live in the same house with these poor foreign Jews, and even as neighbours they are unpleasant; and, since people of this race, though sometimes quarrelsome amongst themselves, are extremely gregarious and sociable, each small street or group of houses invaded tends to become entirely Jewish. Houses are bought or rented, however dilapidated they may be, or with however short a lease to run. The previous tenants are ejected, nominally for repairs, and their place is

taken by the new owners or their new tenants, the houses being let and sublet and packed full of poor Jews. The crowding that results is very great, and the dirt reported as indescribable. House and land values rise, however. Rents are punctually paid by the tenants in chief, and are without doubt no less punctually collected from their sub-tenants.

Jewish influence is everywhere discernible. Chapels are superseded by synagogues, parish churches are left stranded; Jewish children are being largely enrolled even in the Church schools, and an increasing number of the Board schools are being obliged to adopt Jewish holidays. The Jews have their local representatives in Parliament and on the Borough Council; the self-managed working men's clubs are in their hands; at one time they nearly monopolised the People's Palace; and in Spitalfields they have taken possession of a benevolent society, a special object of which, earlier in the century, was to give help to the descendants of Protestant Huguenots!

In addition to the coming of the Jews there have been changes due to structural and industrial causes. Partly for business and partly for sanitary reasons, great clearances have been made, and those who formerly occupied the demolished houses have moved out North or East. We have found traces of them in many of the poor patches of the Outer ring. The proximity of the City has led to the absorption of large portions of the district for warehouses, and as regards water-side employment, the docks and the ships, the men and their work have to a great extent moved further down the river; and such employment as remains has become more regular in character. Nor are these readjustments yet completed. Business premises continue to extend, the Jewish population to increase, and the field for casual dock labour to be more and more restricted. All this we see in

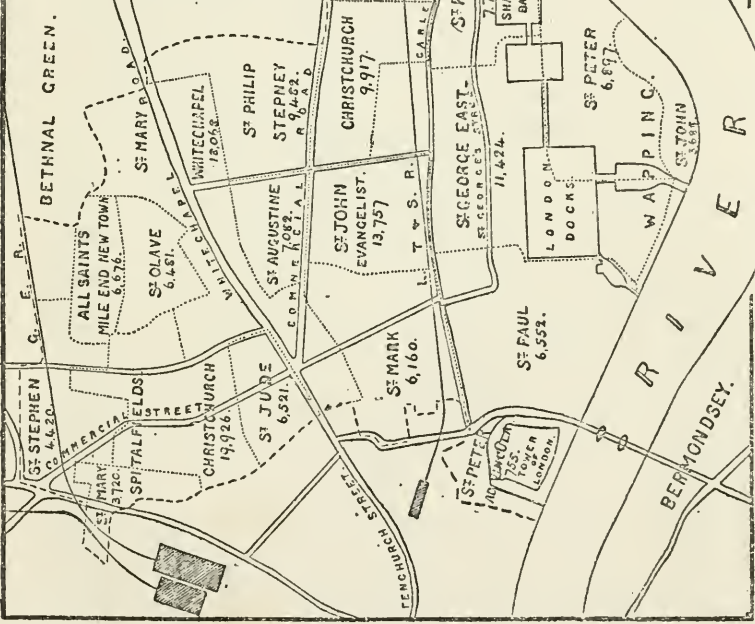


**SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.**  
**INNER EAST LONDON.**  
**VOL. II., CHAPTER I.**

**POPULATION (1891) OF ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES.**

ST STEPHEN	4,903	CHRISTCHURCH	8,615
ST MARY SPITAL sq	3,587	ST MARY	5,622
CHRISTCHURCH	13,137	ST PAUL	6,673
ALL SAINTS	5,104	ST GEORGE EAST	10,551
ST OLAVE	6,199	ST PAUL SHADWELL	7,048
ST MARY WHITECHAPEL	16,985	ST JAMES RATCLIFF	6,666
ST JUDE	5,854	ST PETER	7,477
ST AUGUSTINE	7,277	ST JOHN	3,226
ST PHILIP	6,114	ST PETER AD VINCULA	868
ST MARK	6,406		
ST JOHN EVANGELIST.	12,950	TOTAL (1891)	132,275.
		INCREASING TO (1901)	161,359.

FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP.



POPULATION [1901] IS PRINTED UNDER THE NAME OF PARISH ON MAP

STATISTICS bearing on the AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 5. Described in Chapter I. (Vol. II.).

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

POPULATION IN			Increase per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
145,022	145,431	151,570	0.3 %	5.3 %

Age and Sex in 1891.			
AGE.	Males.	Females.	Together.
Under 5 years	9,448	9,981	19,429
5 & under 15 yrs	15,329	15,359	30,688
— 20 "	7,663	7,010	14,673
— 25 "	7,941	7,209	15,150
— 35 "	13,060	11,166	24,226
— 45 "	9,331	7,857	17,188
— 55 "	6,454	5,737	12,191
— 65 "	3,735	3,536	7,271
65 and over	2,132	2,493	4,615
Totals	75,093	79,338	145,431

NOTE.—The area included in this Sketch Map comprises the whole of WHITECHAPEL, ST. GEORGE'S-IN-THE-EAST, and SHAPWELL, the greater part of RATCLIFF, and the western part of MILLS END-OLD TOWN. In the statistics here given the whole of Ratcliff is included, and the portion of Mills End Old Town omitted. For a more detailed statement of the Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

SEX.	BIRTHPLACE.		INDUSTRIAL STATUS.		TOTAL HEADS.
	Male.	Female.	Employers	Employees	
24,602 83 %	13,910 47 %	5,091 17 %	2,784 9 %	21,219 72 %	29,693 100 %
				5,690 19 %	

Constitution of Families.

HEADS.	Others Occupied.		Unoccupied.	Servants.	TOTAL IN FAMILIES.
	In London.	Out of London.			
29,693 (1'0)	31,370 (1'06)	70,283 (2'37)	1,617 (.05)	132,963 (4'48)	

SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION according to Rooms Occupied or Servants Kept.

PERSONS.	PER CENT.	PERSONS PER ROOM.		PERSONS PER SERVANT.
		Occupied.	Kept.	
4 or more persons to a room	18.621	12.8	Crowded	
3 & under 4	21.844	15.0	52.7 %	
2 & " 3	36.343	24.9		
1 & " 2	26.147	18.0		
Less than 1 person to a room	2.590	1.8		
Occupying more than 4 rooms	18.162	12.5		
4 or more persons to 1 servant	5.353	3.7	Not	
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	1.878	1.3	Crowded	
All others with 2 or more servants	408	.3		
Servants in families	1,617	1.1		
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	12,468	8.6		
Total	145,431	100		
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)			43.1 %	
" in Comfort "			57.5 %	

operation ; and all these changes, while entirely due to other causes, have greatly affected the religious and philanthropic work of which this district is the field, so that the development of each organization is to some extent a record of the changes themselves. It is more difficult to measure the effects produced on the panorama of East-End life by religion and philanthropy than it is to trace on these the influence of changed and changing conditions.

But although the spread of the Jews has been rapid, it would be far from the whole truth merely to say that they have ousted the original inhabitants, for as we see many of these were disturbed by other causes. Nor when the Jews have ousted others does the community necessarily suffer ; on the contrary, it is sometimes recognised that they have acted as 'moral scavengers' ; for it is undoubtedly true that the Jews 'improve the character of the worst streets when they get in.' They have already taken one end of Great Pearl Street and 'it is probably the Jews alone who will turn out the prostitutes from the end that is still bad.'

The religious life of the Jews has been described in a previous volume.\* It is a family religion, a matter of birth and heritage, even more than of belief. Its activities are evidenced in the numerous synagogues, which in this district make of Saturday a second Sunday, by the great Jewish Free School, and by the careful organization of their charities. It is not too much to say that no one born a Jew is untouched by the influence of his religion. The poor, ignorant, half-civilized foreign Jew forms no part of 'heathen' London, and indeed he observes the ritual and respects the traditions of his faith more scrupulously than do his English born and better educated brethren.

With regard to the present relations between our religion and theirs, it must be admitted that all attempts

\* Vol. III. of First Series, or Vol. I. of the original edition.

at conversion to Christianity are a failure. Immense sums are spent with practically no result. The money subscribed is and must be entrusted to the discretion of the missionary, for the Jewish convert, ostracised by his own people and not very warmly welcomed by ours, necessarily requires financial assistance. It is not quite fair to brand this as bribery. The money or assistance received may not be the attraction. There may probably be some genuine conversions. It would indeed be strange if there were not ; strange, if among the Jews alone there were none found who, overpowered by the sense of sin, find a haven in the Pauline Christian theory of salvation ; none among the race which gave it birth, whose souls respond to the spiritual experiences on which that theory rests.

In the effort to win the Jews, one of their own race who has become convinced of the doctrine of Salvation through Christ is the best agent. He can base his appeal on their own scriptures and seek to show that the Messiah the Jews still look for has indeed come. As a result of such ministrations a congregation of baptized Jews has been formed here. It is said to be the only one in Europe, and its success is a measure of the general failure.

We are told that the poor foreign Jews, ignorant as they are of religious history, are surprised to find that our Bible contains their scriptures and to learn that their God is ours also. But they are well read in their own sacred books ; exclusive and narrow in the application of the teaching found therein ; and scrupulous in their obedience to the letter of the law. Defrauded of their great inheritance, sad loyalists of religion, they still feel themselves to be members of the chosen aristocracy of God.

The attitude of the clergy on this question varies. Some frankly abandon all idea of conversion or interference. Let a Jew, they say, remain under the

influence of his own religion, and try to be a good Jew. Others fling themselves upon this task, feeling perhaps that their whole religious position is involved in the triumph of the Gospel and in the gathering in of the lost sheep of the House of Israel. To this end money is freely subscribed. Others, again (including, perhaps, most of the East-End clergy), are half-hearted. While not willing to lower their flag, they recognise that no good comes of any of the attempts made. They see that the missions for the conversion of the Jews are apt to breed a contemptible and hypocritical spirit, and that at best, with very few exceptions, they succeed in obtaining as genuine converts only very poor specimens of humanity. They will heartily pray for the conversion of the Jews, but prefer to leave the accomplishment in God's hands.

Moreover, the stronger their own belief, and the firmer their conviction of the universal application of the doctrine they preach and of its paramount claim as the only way of salvation, the more clearly must they realize the need of overcoming the absolute indifference to this truth of the great mass of a nominally Christian population before they can rely on it with any comfort in approaching the Jews. Elsewhere it may be different, but here in London the unconverted and unconvinced condition of our own people cannot be denied or ignored, and a Christian who attempts to evangelize the Jews finds his own position seriously undermined.

The richer Jews are expected to look after their own poor, and to a great extent they do so, cases demanding relief being usually referred to the great organized charity which goes by the name of the Jewish Board of Guardians. But poor Jews are ready to take advantage of any available source of relief, and in sickness are finding their way in increasing numbers to the Whitechapel Infirmary, to which, of course, they con-

tribute as ratepayers, and to the London Hospital, to which wealthy Jews doubtless subscribe.

The assistance of their own Board of Guardians often take the form of loans granted free of interest. Complaint is made that such loans are unfair to other traders ; but that money can be thus lent without much loss shows that this form of charity does not seriously demoralize ; and it would be well if no worse charge could be made against the economic effect of much Christian benevolence.

The Jews are not one body. They are divided by ritual ; by their stricter or their laxer interpretation of the Law ; and by nationality. Besides those who have become English, there are Dutch, German, Polish and Russian Jews. Among all these the environment of English custom and administration makes itself felt ; most strongly among the more scattered Germans, most weakly here in the heart of the Ghetto, but slowly and gradually even among the most exclusive and backward. They all seem to prosper and, as they gradually become Anglicised, the standard of life among them rises, especially if or perhaps as the proportion of new comers becomes smaller. It is a disputed point whether the concentration or dispersion of this population is best for us or for them. Among the leaders of the Jews there are on this question two parties : the one side feeling strongly that where the Jews are collected in one district the Sabbath is more likely to be kept, and that in general there is more scope for the religious and other organizations which tend to preserve the integrity of the race, while the other welcomes the wider influences of English life which are weakened by concentration. That the policy of dispersion is best from the point of view of the English nation I cannot doubt. We need not fear to admit the Jews, so long as they do not come too fast or concentrate too solidly for assimilation. Except

temporarily they do not increase the pressure of poverty, however poor they may be when they come, nor do they permanently lower the standard of life, however limited their first demands may be. But at the same time it cannot be denied that they seriously aggravate the difficulties of administration, especially as regards the evils of overcrowding.

The last twenty-five or thirty years have seen the rise of a number of great organizations aimed at the amelioration of the conditions of life in East London, and the moral and spiritual advancement of its people. So largely have these efforts been concentrated upon this particular district of London, that elsewhere it is often regarded as receiving more than its share. 'We are just as poor' (we hear it said rather bitterly), 'but our poverty excites no such interest. *We* are not the "East End."'

The story is indeed a record of the extraordinary amount of assistance that may be obtained from outside sources for religious and philanthropic work due to a great arousing of the public conscience as regards the welfare of the poor, and also of the close association in the public mind of physical and spiritual destitution, poverty, ignorance and depravity, with the 'East End.'

The East End has certainly no monopoly of need, and this fact is becoming more and more recognised; but there has been no withdrawal of public support. Many are ready to give work, and money continues to be found in large amounts for very various objects. Whatever disappointment there may have been in the anticipated results it has not been enough to dash the ardent hopefulness by which these efforts have been sustained.

In describing these various efforts and in estimating the part played by them and by other social influences, for good or evil, it will be necessary to break up the

area into its component parts—Spitalfields, Whitechapel, St. George's-in-the-East, and the river side—and to treat each one of them separately.

## § 2

### SPITALFIELDS

The parishes connected with Spitalfields are Christ Church, St. Mary, and St. Stephen, but with them it will be convenient to include All Saints' and St. Olave's, Mile End New Town, and the parts of St. Matthias' and St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green, which lie to the south of the Great Eastern Railway line.

In this area the inhabitants are mainly Jews, and in some of the parishes the proportion is said to reach seventy-five per cent. or more. It may be open to question whether all the existing parishes should be retained as separate ecclesiastical districts ; but however this may be it is clear that a parish cannot become thus largely Jewish without some effect on the position and work of the Church. One vicar says that his church must become a Jewish mission if the process of Judaising goes much further ; and another, who claims only ten per cent. of Christians out of a population of six thousand, has almost given up in despair. But on the whole the effect is much less than might have been supposed, for those who have left the neighbourhood were often hardly more interested in church services than those who have come. The Nonconformists have suffered far more in proportion than the Church, having quite lost their supporters, the small tradesmen. As chapels hardly any of their buildings survive, but a number of them have been acquired by the Jews and turned into synagogues. On Sunday morning the parish churches are practically empty. In the evening



they gather together more or less of a congregation consisting of middle-class people, some of whom come from a distance and maintain in this way an old connection, together with others of the same class from the neighbourhood, and a few poor women who make this return for the assistance they receive. The number of men of any description who attend the services is quite small. Almost every church has a little band of devoted adherents from the parish or immediate neighbourhood; but the church-workers are drawn largely from outside. The life and work of each church is the life and work of the clergy and of a small body of attached people. The number of communicants is always large in proportion to the congregation.

It may be of interest if I describe in some detail the organization and action of one of these churches, and I have selected St. Mary's, Spitalfields, for this purpose. In it the ritual is rather Low than High. Besides the vicar and one curate there is a paid Bible woman and a Church Army captain, who, with his wife, carries on the more militant part of the parish work. There is also an unpaid lady worker in charge of the girls' club, and an honorary almoner. In addition there are four district visitors, eight members of a 'mission choir,' sixteen Sunday school teachers, and fifteen other voluntary workers, or a staff of fifty in all. The vicar reckons that his voluntary workers give him on the average two hours per week each. There are day schools, separately staffed, of which the class-rooms are used every week-day evening, as well as for the Sunday school. At the church, which accommodates 450, the first service on Sunday (Holy Communion) at 8 a.m. is very sparsely attended. The communicants' roll contains 113 names. The morning service at 11 draws about fifty, and in the evening at half-past six, there may be as many as one hundred present, counting children in both cases, but excluding the clergy and

choir. Some of those who come in the morning probably come again in the evening ; nearly all are said to be parishioners. A week-day service is held on Wednesday attended by a few of the workers. An attempt to touch a larger circle is made by a mission service at 8.15 on Sunday evening for which some of those who have attended at 6.30 may stay, but which is specially aimed at a poorer class, the church being darkened and the service made interesting by the use of lantern slides. The audience is, however, still very small, not usually more than 130. With the same object, outside services are held by the mission choir, who strive in this way to throw their light upon the outer darkness, but, I gather, with very little effect.

There are Bible-classes which those of the inner circle attend ; and there is a Communicants' Guild, which assembles quarterly. The ladies meet to work together, making garments for the poor, or articles for a sale of work, or preparing for an annual flower show. They form, too, a district visiting society which controls the fund for the relief of the poor. The visitation of the parish is very thorough, as it well may be, for the Christian population is small and concentrated. Visiting is regarded as the most important part of the work. The primary object is to become acquainted with the people and in this the clergy claim success. The ulterior aim is to attract them so far as possible to the ministrations of the church ; but how little is achieved in this direction we have seen. No means are neglected. Relief is given as required, though controlled as far as may be by the honorary almoner. There are two mothers' meetings, with a coal club open to the women who attend them, which gives a bonus of 2*d* on every hundredweight of coal bought, and a blanket society for lending blankets in winter. There is a club for men with sixty members, which meets at the schoolroom four times a week, games, &c., being provided : sub-

scription 1*d* per week. There is also a provident bank for parishioners and a Mutual Loan Society. All are efforts to reach and hold the people. The Sunday schools are small, but not small compared to the size of the parish, and they are followed up by a lads' institute with fifty members, in connection with which there are cricket and football clubs and a gymnasium; a girls' club also has recently been started, with forty members, in the management of which the students of the Young Women's Christian Association's Training Home will take part. Altogether the organization is excellent; everything seems well done. For temperance work there are Bands of Hope and adult meetings; and foreign missions are not forgotten, periodic gatherings being held to stir up interest in them and in the work among the Jews. For this last the engagement of a special missionary is looked forward to, and a special service in Hebrew or Yiddish has been already held.

It is hard, devoted work, successful in its way, without blowing of trumpets or inflated illusions, or sensational appeals made to the public; but the work goes on and the parish is kept out of debt.

The central parish of Christ Church, with five or six times the population and a more powerful staff, has a more difficult, or, I might better say, more impossible task. For with fully as great a proportion of Jews, there is also the lowest conceivable class of English. In addition to having 'the largest and lowest common lodging-house population of any parish in England,' it has 'the largest free-shelter accommodation,' as well as many 'furnished rooms,' whose occupants, male and female, touch quite the bottom level. Here and there may be found a few artisans, but of our own people, no one with a shred of decency will live in such company if he can possibly avoid doing so. Here the Jews, if they come, drive other and worse microbes out.

In addition to the rector and three curates, there

are two City missionaries working in this parish ; and besides the church there are two or three mission halls. The work undertaken includes clubs for men and boys, and two large girls' clubs. There is also a soup kitchen, and there are four mothers' meetings. In none of these are any religious tests required. There is also a large day school and a Sunday school fitfully attended by children who are entirely their own masters. Again, it is extremely hard work. I do not think it can be called successful.

The congregations, morning and evening, are small, and even so, consist largely of unknown people, attracted by the situation of the church and the sound of its bells, or by the fame of its organ. The numbers are further made up by the inmates of some adjacent labour homes. There is a crowded service at one of the mission halls on Sunday afternoon, and it is significant of the class of people to be dealt with here, and the difficulties of the parochial task, that it should be described as the most interesting service that is held. It is for the destitute, and at its close each person receives a piece of bread and a cup of coffee. It may be that these people will not come on other terms ; 'shall man serve God for naught ?' But it is a question whether the church can be justified in such action, helping, so far as it goes, absolutely without discrimination, to make mere existence, and often harmful existence, more possible. And as to religion, what good is likely to result ?

In St. Olave's, where a still larger proportion of the population is Jewish, a congregation of seven or eight persons in the morning and possibly fifty in the evening is all that the vicar ever expects to see. The service, however, is carefully given by a well-trained choir, and, though on a small scale, this church, too, has its Sunday school, mothers' meeting, boys' club and men's club, with the usual accompaniments, treats,

teas, &c. ; and here, too, the people are visited and distress relieved. The funds come from the old City foundation of St. Olave, Hart Street.

The most characteristic mission work in this neighbourhood is that aimed directly at the inmates of common lodging-houses. For them free breakfasts of coffee and bread and butter are provided on Sunday morning by several organizations. Admission is by tickets distributed to 'homeless, houseless persons,' over night ; or without ticket in the morning, to all who come till the room is full. Beyond a refusal in some cases to admit the same men many Sundays in succession, there is no attempt at selection. After breakfast a religious service is held for which the guests are expected to remain. The object is to bring the men under the influence of the Gospel, and within reach of friendly help. After the service a few will remain, and these are talked with, advised, and, it may be, helped. Some man, who has only recently fallen to the level of common lodging-house existence, may be picked out and given a chance to go back to a more respectable life ; but to take advantage of this opportunity involves considerable effort, and by those who have become accustomed to the degraded ease of lodging-house existence the effort is rarely made. Against any possible success in this direction must be set the responsibility already referred to, as incurred by those who facilitate the existence at large of the unfit, and those of this district who take advantage of the facilities thus offered are admittedly amongst the most unfit that the community can show.

Even more remarkable are the services given by the mission bands in the kitchens of the lodging-houses themselves. So complete is the organization of this system that there are, it is said, only three common lodging-houses in East London where no religious meetings are held, and in these, it is curious to note,

the mission service was discontinued because theological wrangling of too animated a character followed the introduction of some debateable doctrine. Those who frequent these places are by no means unintelligent, and are so mixed that 'a good deal of discretion has to be shown, and an unsectarian and non-combative stand-point adopted by the speakers.' And this among the people who are often referred to as having never heard of Christ!

The inaugurator of missions of this type, while grieved that 'so little comes' of these services from a religious point of view, attaches great importance to their generally humanizing influence, and lays stress on the individual cases in which good results have been secured. He speaks of the lodging-house audiences as very attentive. I should rather say, so far as I have myself seen, that the services are accepted with good-humoured indifference, tempered by occasional dissentient grunts from those who listen at all. Cooking and eating proceed undisturbed; men come and go; the swing-door opens and shuts; few, if any, join the mission band in singing the hymns, and to raise the voice in prayer must be even more difficult than at a service in the open streets. These efforts are not subject to the objections which apply to the free breakfast system: they do nothing to encourage a low form of life; but their religious value must be sought for mainly in the exemplary devotion shown by those who, Sunday after Sunday, pursue this seemingly hopeless work for Christ's sake.

There is one Congregationalist Church in Mile End New Town which has survived and, under a new minister, is becoming a fairly active centre of religious life; but the local conditions fight so strongly against permanent resuscitation that there is even now talk of a removal to the suburbs. The congregation comes from some distance, but efforts are made by means of

special lectures to interest neighbouring non-church-goers, and from these a few are drawn in.

Mile End New Town is also the scene of one of the great undenominational missions whose efforts and appeals to the public for support have done much to give the East End its peculiar notoriety. It had its origin, as was the case with all its fellows, in a ragged school, at a time long before the Education Act. With each ragged school a mission was incorporated, and evangelical enthusiasm has carried the work forward. These undertakings were pioneers in the field of public begging. They rested their case on a simple tale of ignorance and hunger among helpless children, of widespread misery and destitution, and of their relief. They used the language of the Bible as to the widow and the orphan; the sick, the hungry and the naked were to be visited and relieved, while to the poor the Gospel was to be preached. All this and more has been done.

What follows is a list of 'some of the operations' carried on at the 'King Edward Ragged School and Mission':—

1. Sunday schools, with an average attendance of one thousand.
2. Free night schools for boys and girls employed during the day.
3. Industrial classes for teaching girls needlework, cutting-out, darning, &c.; twenty-five per cent. of cost given to girls towards materials for their own clothing made up by them at the schools and institute.
4. Carpentering, cabinet-making and fretwork classes for lads; lads afterwards apprenticed.
5. Cookery classes for girls and women (two).
6. Drawing classes for boys.
7. Class for teaching young girls dressmaking.
8. Band of Hope and singing classes.

9. Gymnasium, string and drum and fife bands, swimming and cricket clubs.
10. Young Girls' Christian Association.
11. Working Lads' Christian Association.
12. Thirty-six Bible-classes for boys and girls, young men and young women.
13. Bible-class for working men, forty in attendance.
14. Bible-class for women, eighty in attendance.
15. Mothers' meetings : average attendance 450. 650 on the books.
16. Clothing and bedding clubs.
17. Free circulating library for adults ; upwards of 82,000 books and publications lent and given away during the year.
18. Free circulating library for boys and girls : two thousand volumes.
19. Christian instruction and society for the free circulation of elevating literature : between five and six hundred houses visited weekly.
20. Reading-rooms for very poor men of the neighbourhood.
21. Mission services and lectures for adults.
22. Children's services, Sundays and Wednesdays.
23. Visitation to working men in the work shops and their homes by our own missionary.
24. A trained nurse to attend the sick poor in their own homes.
25. Visitation of the sick : upwards of forty thousand visits paid to the sick and to the homes of the poor during the year.
26. A benevolent society for helping the sick and aged poor.
27. Country homes for weak and convalescent children and adults : nearly six hundred sent away in the summer, for from one to four weeks.
28. A Maternal Society for the free loan and distribution of linen to poor married women



- and their infants during the month of their confinement.
29. White-wash brushes and pails lent, and materials given to poor people to cleanse the walls and ceilings of their rooms.
  30. Free hot nourishing dinners to poor children of struggling widows and others, three days a week during the winter months.
  31. Day in the country : upwards of 2500 taken last year.
  32. Annual Industrial Exhibition of carpentry, cabinet-making, models of machinery and buildings, boat-making, needlework, knitting, darning, trimming, &c., executed by the boys and girls of the Institution.

It is a wonderful list. The charities touch all the main troubles of life. In the educational classes all tastes are considered. A great point is made of training young people in frugality and thrift. Religious teaching, while not unduly insisted upon, clearly underlies the whole. Excepting independence almost every virtue is inculcated.

More than £3000 a year is received from the public to be expended upon the work, and it is very evident that great pains have been taken to put forward what is done in the way thought most likely to please the subscribers. The long list of operations is not for self-glorification, but simply and solely to encourage the givers of money. That this list makes the most of everything is certain ; but a great deal is really done. The aim is 'the improvement of the material and spiritual welfare of the poor' ; 'the extension of God's kingdom here on earth.' It is 'an endeavour to show Christianity as a practical religion' ; and if there is disappointment at the results produced in the extension of God's kingdom, the workers can still trust that it will be 'accepted by

the Master as work done for Him,' and can rejoice over those few who are gathered in to join the band of 'labourers in the vineyard.' Year by year for fifty years the appeals have been liberally responded to. The administration of vast sums has been secured. The Mission has enjoyed the patronage of Princes and Princesses. In the language of the report 'God has abundantly blessed them.'

In this matter there are three parties concerned : those who give their money, those who carry on the work which the money enables them to do, and 'the poor' who are the recipients.

Once again we find that the result from the directly religious point of view is the gathering together of a small band of adherents and workers. The special interest in this case lies in the fact that they are drawn to a considerable extent from those among whom they work and never from a class much above. The head of this great organization was himself one of the original poor children taught at the school he now superintends. A great effort is made to retain a hold on the growing boys and girls by classes and clubs, and though sooner or later most slip away, enough remain in connection with the Mission to strengthen and carry on the Sisyphean task of evangelizing the masses.

The religious gatherings are small. Only in the Sunday schools and mothers' meetings are the numbers large, and, apart from the work among the children, this evangelizing work only results in the institution and exercise of a more than common amount of organized kindness and charitable assistance. It is in these ways that the money is spent, subject to many economic and moral dangers of which there is little consciousness in the minds of these simple servants of God, who, feeling deeply the needs of those whom they call 'their brethren in Christ,' try to act according

to Christ's teaching while at the same time proclaiming His Gospel. This is the mainspring of all they do. They hope by succouring the body to soften the heart and prepare the soul for the good seed they scatter. They do not share in the rivalry of the churches and sects; they have no special dogmas to uphold, and in so far cannot reasonably be charged with bribery. They seek those who 'know not Christ,' and their work does lie mainly amongst those who take no interest in religious observances of any kind. It is not, however, from this class that all or even most of their workers are drawn. They, perhaps, more often attract to their flag earnest Christians who have failed to find full religious satisfaction in other communities. In this sense they are 'sheep stealers,' but the only bribe they offer is a better opportunity of serving Christ; and these while working with them probably retain membership of some other church. There may sometimes be a conscious struggle with other religious bodies for the mothers and children. It becomes a rivalry of numbers; for, being human, they cannot resist the sportsman's desire for 'a good bag.' They dearly love to deal in large figures, and the records of their work become not only a source of pride, but form the basis of their claim on the public, from whom the stream of money flows upon which the whole work depends.

It would be easy to ascribe low motives, but I believe absolutely unjust. Only I would have those who are responsible beware of the spirit of exaggeration as tending to aggravate all the dangers that surround their action. This warning applies to most other great missionary enterprises fully as much as to this one, for, though in some ways amongst themselves they differ, they all suffer from this propensity. In none of them do I recognise a stronger or purer Christian spirit than shines out in the Mission whose

work I have described. I have attended service in their mission church and sat among the little body of earnest men and women gathered together there, all poor working-class people, following, with Bible open before them, the preacher's words, or singing with strong voices the hymns they love; and nowhere in all my visits among the churches have I seen anything quite like it; nowhere so close an approach to what we may imagine primitive Christianity to have been.

An effort of a different character is that connected with the Bedford Institute, in the parish of St. Stephen, where a large amount of social and philanthropic work is carried on, combined with some religious activity. The leading feature here, as at each of the mission centres connected with the Society of Friends, is the First-day school, but there are also other meetings of a religious character, as well as lectures, evening classes, and clubs, temperance meetings, and Band of Hope, mothers' meetings, &c., the attendance in all comprising about two thousand persons. It does not appear, however, that these are drawn to any considerable extent from the neighbourhood, but rather that they come from the south-west corner of Bethnal Green.

### § 3

#### WHITECHAPEL

The parishes of St. Mary, St. Jude, and St. Mark, Whitechapel, and of St. Augustine, Stepney, share with those of Spitalfields the common lodging-houses and the Jews. In the first three the work of the Church is much the same as in Spitalfields, and again we find it supplemented, and even outdone, by that of a great

undenominational mission. But St. Augustine's, where the High Church has stepped in, and which we shall refer to last, is run on quite other lines.

St. Mary's, the parish church of Whitechapel, is an active centre of evangelization, and in spite of the moving away of the church-going class, maintains fair congregations. Many, of the workers especially, come from further East; being those who formerly lived here, and still take an interest in the parish. The poor are found very difficult to reach, having, it is asserted, been spoilt in the past, so that the time came when no visitor would be received who did not bring something. Different agencies overlap, but this, the rector thinks, is not so much the fault of the visitors, as due to the painstaking efforts of the poor who, in order to benefit as much as possible, 'trot from meeting to meeting.' So far as may be, the benefit of the social agencies, which include a large and highly successful loan club, is here confined to those who are definitely connected with the church. There are more Jews than Christians in the parish, but the total population is great, and the church can claim a larger circle than the parish.

At St. Mark's, with a larger proportion of Jews out of a smaller total, there is, as at St. Olave's, little to justify existence as a separate parish. In the schools, and in the good choral rendering of the services, we find (1898) the only satisfactory items. There is a daily service for men in a 'refuge,' where the charge for the night's lodging is *1d.* To these men a free breakfast is given on Sunday morning, after which they are expected to come to church. In addition, work among the Jews is attempted by means of a curate, who is himself a converted Jew.

St. Jude's, too, between the Jews on the one hand and the lodging-house population on the other, is left with a very small parochial element; and now that it

is no longer connected with Toynbee Hall it has lost the peculiar collegiate position it for a long time held. Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the work of this church is the Worship Hour, a solemn, though partly secular, Sunday afternoon service for many years arranged by Mrs. Barnett, the wife of the former vicar, and till recently still to a certain extent under her supervision.

Though the parish of St. Augustine, like the others, has been overrun by the Jews, the vicar has succeeded in making his church the centre of very active work. He is an extreme High Churchman, and the services are of the most advanced kind; such as Low Churchmen would call 'playing with Rome.' He came to a stagnant parish, and in fourteen years has multiplied everything by about fourteen. His success shows what a man of great energy and uncompromising principles of churchmanship, with a large staff of workers, and a free use of sensational methods, can accomplish under circumstances apparently the most adverse. The vicar would attribute his success to the grace of God and the power of the doctrines that are taught, while others might say that the people are bought. Money is indeed freely spent here, and the art of raising it is well understood, but my own impression is that the influence wielded by the vicar of St. Augustine's is due rather to the vigour of his personality than either the doctrines taught or 'the attractive force of £4000 a year.' In one way or another not only is the church filled, but a firm hold seems to have been secured upon some five hundred East-End people drawn from his own and other parishes, for whom the vicar's ideal is that they should live, move, and have their being in and about the church, all that is done for them and by them being in pursuit of the conversion and sanctification of their souls. Many of the workers come from other districts.

There is in Great Alie Street a Strict Baptist chapel the teaching at which provides a strong contrast to that of St. Augustine's. It is a very old-fashioned looking place with high-backed pews, and the pastor sits aloft in a tall wooden pulpit. The congregation comes from almost everywhere except the immediate neighbourhood. Some of those who come from the greatest distance stay all day on Sunday, arranging to dine, and bringing their children with them for the afternoon school. Forty or so come also to the week-night services. The congregation was formed in 1808 by a section splitting off from the ancient Baptist church in Old Gravel Lane, and as late as 1856 the chapel in Great Alie Street had many members, merchants and others, living near by. All have now moved away. But though some have been lost, many still maintain the connection. Including the deep galleries, there is accommodation for seven hundred worshippers, and the chapel is nearly half-filled for the two Sunday services. It is by the strictness and exclusiveness of their doctrine and the terms of church membership that the congregation is bound together. For very many years, before the times of the present pastor, the pulpit was served by 'supplies,' presumably because they found no one to suit them as their permanent minister. Yet the congregation held together. Their uncompromising sternness in matters of belief has made it impossible for them to unite with the remnant of a congregation whose chapel is in Commercial Street, opposite St. Jude's, though this would have been financially very desirable, or with the chapel close by in Little Alie Street, which is at present without a pastor, because both these, though also 'Strict,' are not what are called 'Particular' Baptists. On the other hand, it must be said that these two others, though nominally of exactly the same faith, have themselves been unable to agree upon terms

of fusion ; so strong is the element of individuality in this body.

A Congregationalist place of worship, in Whitechapel Road, and one or two other Nonconformist churches just manage to exist, drawing their people from a distance ; but of undenominational missions there are several, and one of them, which was conducted by Mr. Holland in George Yard, is on a scale almost equal to that of King Edward's Mission already described.\*

The impulse for these two great Missions, and for many others in all parts of London, came from the late Lord Shaftesbury. As already stated, they began as ragged schools, and here at George Yard, though much has been added, the ragged school still remains. The children who attend it are of a very poor type, and though much helped with gifts of clothes remain extremely ragged. Their parents are the constantly shifting crowd who occupy the poor streets near, and gifts of food and clothes attract the children to the school. To be ragged and uncared for is their best qualification, and on these terms the assistance given tends to become a permanent barrier to improvement. Even if the charitable gifts continued, it would probably be better that the day school should be closed and the children drafted to some Board school. The Sunday school has 850 on its books, of whom on the average only 380 attend.

Much ordinary and some extraordinary mission work is carried on at George Yard. A very long list of 'operations' could be drawn up. There is something for everyone ; 'for children, for young women and elder girls, for young men and for adults.' There are three distinct blocks of buildings, in one of which there is a large hall seating eight hundred persons, and used on Sunday evening for Evangelistic services.

\* Mr. Holland died in 1900 at the age of seventy-six, after forty-six years' work at George Yard.



These services are fairly attended. 'If you have the right sort of thing they will come.' Many come from a distance; but the other work of the mission lies amongst its poor neighbours. There are four hundred to five hundred women in the mothers' meetings, and they have a special meeting for inebriate women, 'who will break the pledge time after time, till, in answer to prayer, God takes away the desire for drink.' The most successful branch of the work is that connected with girls. They have a building to themselves, with class rooms and play rooms, parlours and library. It is something between a school and club. The classes are taken by ladies, and, in addition to the actual lessons given, the object aimed at is 'Christian sympathy.'

These two words were the key-note of Mr. Holland's whole life and work. All was well intentioned, and everyone held Mr. Holland in the highest esteem, but about George Yard the tradition of the combination of religion with relief hangs like an atmosphere from which it is hard to get away.

Of the remaining parishes in Stepney, lying to the east of St. Augustine's, three, viz., Christ Church, St. Thomas', and St. Dunstan's, have been included with outer East London in Volume I. In these parishes the Jews are coming, but have hardly come; but in St. Philip's, which I include here, they are rapidly ousting Christians. Otherwise St. Philip's parish has none of the elements of Whitechapel. In it the Church of England has not been very much affected by the change in population. Those who have left were not regular adherents of the Church any more than are those who remain. Nor did they belong to any other religious body, though doubtless they were to be counted among the 'occasional attenders,' and furnished their quota to the huge congregations that gather at the Great Assembly Hall or Edinburgh

Castle, or wherever some special attraction may offer. Those who live in this neighbourhood are of many occupations and industries, 'servants of the City' who are here within easy reach of their work.

Although St. Philip's is very little known, and locally quite neglected, its noble proportions and exquisite interior would fully fit it to become the Cathedral of East London, and only a little touch of fashion would be needed to fill its aisles with devout worshippers such as now crowd every Sunday to Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's.

#### § 4

##### ST. GEORGE'S IN THE EAST, WAPPING AND SHADWELL

South of Commercial Road, the limit of the Jewish flood at the present time is reached in St. John's parish ; but here it is running strong. Ten years ago there were comparatively few, and twenty years ago hardly any Jews ; now the vicar estimates them as at least seventy per cent. of the population. His people are almost all poor, the Jews no less than the English, but the Jews pay more rent and pay it more regularly, and the English gradually go. The Church has a small, but attached congregation, with an inner circle of communicants devoted to the vicar, and most of them have formerly been parishioners though they may be so no longer. The most interesting piece of work is a Bible-class held by the vicar. It is crowded, and such is the pressure that if absent three times a member forfeits his place, and in a recent year out of fifty-five members forty-eight did not miss a single meeting. The fact is remarkable, and the explanation no less so. The Bible is made the vehicle for lessons in science, and the resources of the

laboratory are freely used to illustrate its words. "God made the firmament"—what do they know about the firmament?' So their vicar gives the class an insight into the nature of gases. And so absorbing is the interest of the course, and so thorough the teaching, that it has taken six years to reach the end of Genesis.

All the rest of this district, and I include in it the parish of St. Paul, Upper East Smithfield (Whitechapel), remains under the influence of the river, the docks, and the wharves.

Into the parish work of St. George's great energy has been put. Leaving out such as are distinctive of and only found with extreme Evangelicalism or Ritualism, the church organizations are very complete, and they are successful. There is a large congregation which has been brought together and held by the steady work of an able, hard-working, reasonable, unsensational man, helped no doubt by the command of money and by the attractions of a parent parish. The communicants number five hundred. Of this parish it may be said without any serious exaggeration that 'though few are grasped, all are touched.' The 'few' are a selection of the fit; the 'all' include Jews and Roman Catholics, to whom indeed the Church has little to offer, but with whom friendly relations are maintained. Many of the Jewish children come to the Band of Hope.

There are two churches connected with this parish, and the necessary centralization of the work is shown by the absolute failure of the second church to fill any useful *rôle* as a local place of worship.

Of Christ Church and St. Mary's, of St. Paul's, Shadwell, and St. Paul's, Whitechapel, little need be said. They try by this plan and that, to reach the people, but mostly in vain. 'Every kind of mission and mission service is tried, with practically no effect,'

though a novelty may answer for a while. Again, it is said, 'Those who will go anywhere will go to church.' At one of these parishes a new vicar has only just started and has nothing yet to show, while another, about to leave, can only make the same report. The churches are not entirely empty, but the population is untouched.

The outward movement of the lower middle and tradesman class has left the Nonconformist churches in difficulty, but has not wiped them out, as in Spitalfields. Wycliffe Chapel (Congregationalist) in St. Philip's parish, to the north of Commercial Road, holds an almost cathedral position for the body, and though the building is now 'a world too wide' for its shrunk congregation, its members refuse to make any change in their old-fashioned methods, and are probably right in taking this line. Such centres fill an important place in religious life, but are necessarily exceptional.

The Congregational Church in Watney Street, called Ebenezer, yielding to the changed condition of its neighbourhood, is now practically a mission church, serving the poor in many ways, but without inducing them to come regularly, if indeed at all, to any religious service. The work done lies mostly among the children.

The Baptists in Commercial Road as a religious body are much more successful. Their congregation consists of serious-minded lower-middle and working-class people, drawn from the streets near and from further East as far as Bow. They nearly fill their church, which seats six hundred people, and a hearty friendliness prevails. Their Sunday school consists of their own and other well-dressed children. The poorer ones do not care to mix with such as these, so the children sort themselves, the poor going to the Ebenezer or some mission school.

The exodus of the middle class seems to have been

felt most severely by the Wesleyans. This is partly because of the three years' rule, which, by the frequent change of minister, makes it peculiarly difficult to hold together scattered members of a congregation. But the Wesleyans have faced the situation. They have here abandoned that rule; and frankly adopting mission methods, have made of the 'circuit' system an organization which for its vigour and scope of action is without counterpart in East London.

The effort is recent, dating from about the same time as my own inquiry. It was a direct consequence of a voice then raised in the wilderness—'the bitter cry of outcast London.' Its history here in this neighbourhood is the history of fifteen years, and in North, West-Central and South London which followed suit, a shorter time has witnessed a yet more remarkable development. Here in East London three large churches are used, and in addition several mission centres have been established in premises previously occupied as low drinking or dancing saloons. For two of these the old names have been retained—'Paddy's Goose' and the 'Mahogany Bar.' There are three ministers, four evangelists (or missionaries), two nurses, and a doctor—all paid. There are also some twenty resident Sisters of the People, some paid and some not, but all of whom give their whole time and wear the Sister's garb; and about as many young men who give constant evening work. It is a large staff, but proves insufficient for the work undertaken. The churches are fairly filled, and in all a large number of Church members are counted, drawn mainly from the lower middle and working-class people, but not to any great extent from the quite poor.\* They include also a strictly middle-class

\* Of such of the members of the poorest of these congregations as could be classified by employment we have the subjoined particulars. Doubtless there would be in addition wives and other females engaged in household duties:—5 engineers, 7 carpenters, 1 blacksmith, 1 plasterer, 1 mason,

element. The poor are visited and helped. There is a medical mission and a 'people's lawyer,' as well as mothers' meetings and Sunday schools. There is, indeed, hardly any resource that is not tried to serve and save the people; but the special work of this mission lies with the ragged children of the street. Many of these still evade the Board schools and run wild, and to such the Wesleyan mission opens wide its doors, seeking to tempt them in on Sunday and on week-day evenings by teas and prizes. Many of these children are said to be too rough and unkempt for the regular Sunday school and are separately treated, but are passed on into it if or when they are fitted for that advance.

The general system adopted, which I shall have occasion to describe more fully when I come to the central districts, gives a great deal of life to religion; each chapel has its orchestra, and each pulpit is a centre of social and political as well as religious propaganda. The work of the mission undoubtedly does bring religious-minded people together, the motive as usual being for the most part the evangelization of others. This object is attempted by just the same methods as are employed elsewhere and with no materially different results. The most powerful religious influence exerted takes the shape of a reaction on the lives of the workers themselves. The money needed is collected mainly from their own co-religionists, and the usual sensational appeals are issued.

Proceeding now to the riverside, we find in

3 bakers, 2 sailmakers, 1 ropemaker, 1 tarpaulin maker, 1 diver, 4 sailors, 1 bookbinder, 1 hatter, 1 gunmaker, 3 policemen, 2 postmen, 1 dairyman, 10 shopkeepers and shop assistants, 18 clerks (all small), 1 rent collector, 2 sanitary inspectors, 14 casual dockers or labourers, 15 dockers (regular work), 13 dray and carmen, 7 warehousemen, 1 cooper, 2 costers, 14 tailoresses, 12 dressmakers, 1 shirtmaker, 7 laundresses, 3 charwomen, 6 servants, 4 nurses, 6 jam and sweet-makers, 6 teachers; total 178.

Wapping an island with a separate life of its own. No one can enter or leave without passing the constable at the dock bridges. There is here little crime or open profligacy, for the conditions do not suit the criminal or the prostitute, but there is much heavy drinking. Excepting a few dock officials, the people are all working class, connected for the most part with docks or shipping, and many of them are very poor.

A strip of river border forms the quiet little parish of St. John's, in which a large proportion of the population are Roman Catholics. In the adjoining parish of St. Peter's, we find one of the most concentrated and distinctive pieces of parochial work that London has to show. The devotion of the vicar is absolute, and his spirit dominates everything, making the whole work focus in the realization, so far as it can be realized, of the High Church ideal of a parish of devout communicants. There is here a repetition of the extreme Anglicanism of St. Augustine's, the same importance attached to confession, which is regarded as the 'real test,' and the same success. But at St. Peter's the tradition of Ritualism dates back to the days of Father Lowder.

There is an almost complete circle of parish organizations, schools, guilds and clubs; something for those of every age and both sexes. As at St. Augustine's, money is freely spent. The treats and charities are on a lavish scale. The charitable funds are available for all, irrespective of creed, and the administration is of course attacked as bribery, not, perhaps, without reason. The private Mortuary Chapel, the separate plot for parishioners in the burial-ground at Plaistow, the insurance of the vicar's 'bad life,' so that there may be some benefit 'if it please God to allow me, as I should myself desire, to die at my post,' are among the many signs of the

brooding care of this man for the welfare of his parish. But it is the individual soul that is his especial care. His mind and heart are filled with solicitude for the salvation of his people. Illness or accident he regards as a godsend, because of the chance it may offer to break down the barriers. And this priest, who provides dinners for the children, and clubs for every age; who does his utmost to make people healthy and happy, whose poor fund runs into four figures, is led to say that 'the grave is the great consolation;' and finds in funerals the happiest, and in marriages the least happy, part of his work. The two men, the vicars of these parishes, are widely different, but here, as at St. Augustine's, it is not so much the money spent, nor the doctrine taught, as the personality of the man that has won his success.

The value of it is difficult to measure. Religion, to gain strength, is lowered to superstition; other churches are robbed, but still the bulk of the population are untouched; the devotion to the poor is complete, but it is to be feared that they can hardly escape pauperization. In these matters we require to attach many different meanings to the word success.

A close comparison may be made between great spending churches, such as these, and the great spending missions with which they come into hostile competition. Equally enthusiastic, equally self-devoted, equally well backed with money and adopting mainly the same methods of work, they secure a very similar degree of success, which, humbly giving to God the glory, both churches and missions attribute to the divine force contained in the truths they teach. As to these truths, they are themselves more conscious of points of divergence than of agreement, although the essential doctrine of the need for and method of salvation is the same for both; the difference controverted with such bitterness lying in the



accepted terms of approach of man to God, and God to man.

If Wapping is an island, St. James's, Ratcliff, may be considered a peninsula. It is a little corner of London, protected on the South and East by the river and Limehouse Basin, but lying open on the West and North to any tide of poverty, crime, or vice that London may silt into it; and with London, in return, open to its inhabitants to work in or prey upon. In this rough neighbourhood Catholics and Protestants, priest and parson, Churchman and Non-conformist, live side by side in singular harmony. What is done by the church is done for the whole parish without regard to belief or practice in religion. In the clubs there are Catholic as well as Protestant girls, and the prayers used were sanctioned by Cardinal Manning. When once they held a special mission, with processions through the streets, the Catholics were told by their priests that any disturbance on their part would be a deadly sin, and, what is hardly less remarkable, their effort was at the same time prayed for at the great Wesleyan mission. Thus an extraordinarily broad spirit is shown and responded to. The relations of the Church and the people are really much the same here as elsewhere, but the facts are admitted. The acknowledged aim of the Church is to connect and hold together a band of men and women who shall devote their lives to the social improvement of the people. There is no vestige of the propagandist spirit, no demand that the members of this band, and those they seek to serve, should think alike, or kneel in the same building. But any who share their faith or feel spiritually strengthened by kneeling together, are encouraged to do so; and are thereby bound, one with another, for the service of the people in the name of God.

## § 5

## THE ROMAN CATHOLICS

There are six Catholic mission churches in this part of London, one of which is, indeed, situated in Limehouse, a little to the east of the limits laid down, but the district it serves includes the notorious London Street in Ratcliff, and it shares with the other churches on the river front the religious care of the rough Irish who work at the docks and wharves. The ministrations of these churches touch the poorest, and to give freely in charity is the rule of their religion, yet it is these poor people whose contributions support the church. A penny is paid on Sunday by those who attend Mass, which it is the duty of all to do. The priests make it their business to look up such as fail in this duty, and all have the opportunity given them of subscribing to the schools and other church expenses. Except the priests' stipends, which are of the smallest, the charges are mainly borne by the congregation. At the Limehouse mission there is an organized school collection from house to house every Sunday afternoon. Six men undertake this, having each a district, and the priest accompanies each in turn to stir up any who are backward.

The church of SS. Mary and Michael in Commercial Road was the original mission church in East London, and the population still left to it includes eight or nine thousand Catholics. The schools are endowed, but the church is supported by its people, who are mostly poor Irish labourers. This church has a powerful organization. The regular paid staff consists of five priests, but there are generally two young priests in addition who come here to learn their work; and a large number of Sisters undertake teaching, nursing and visiting. These belong to two convents. There

is also a small settlement of ladies from the West End who come here to work. At these churches 10 o'clock Mass is the most crowded, and is attended by the poorest people. The priests complain of irregularity at Mass and of indifference to religious duties, but no one passing from Protestant churches to their's would take that view. They have a higher standard. Moreover, the attendance is unmistakably due to genuine religious feeling and a belief in the divine authority of the Church and its priesthood. Of support purchased by ordinary material benefits there is no trace. The children come to the schools and the schools are full, although the attendance leaves, it is said, something to be desired. 'Deplorable lack of parental authority' is referred to as the cause.

St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Wapping serves a similar class of people. The priest in charge has been there for many years, and reports an increase of crowding and poverty due to the pressure of the Jews, who are driving poor Christians out of St. George's. He has a Roman Catholic population of 2500; all are Irish or of Irish descent, with the exception of a small colony of Italians who work at Gatti's ice wharf. There are nearly six hundred children on the school register, but otherwise, save a small club for girls, nothing is done outside of the services and sacraments of the Church. The church has no money to spend, being poor and heavily in debt for its schools. It has no visitors to work for it, but the priest knows all his people, and is able to visit them himself, living, as they do, within so small an area. Nothing is given. The contrast in this respect with St. Peter's, their High Church neighbour, is great.

The fourth of these riverside churches is that of the English Martyrs in Great Prescott Street. It is architecturally a rather remarkable building, and offers also the attraction of beautiful music. The bulk of

the Catholic population still are poor dock labourers, but there are also tailors and other tradesmen; and here a branch of the Catholic Social Union, with the Dowager Duchess of Newcastle at its head, works in co-operation with the priests. The church itself 'gives nothing' and claims the greater influence thereby, but it is not likely that this can be said of the members of the Social Union. Against them complaints of religious bribery are made.

The priests all refer to the difficulty experienced in retaining the young men. Girls' clubs are successful, but boys after school age cannot be controlled and are apt to drift into indifference. They may, perhaps, be picked up again at marriage, but if a man marries a Protestant he may be entirely lost. Hence the great danger, from the Catholic point of view, of mixed marriages, which otherwise might rather tend to strengthen the Church. The poor Irish, who form the bulk of the Catholic population, are careless, but are naturally devout. They are rough mannered and fight amongst themselves, or with the police at times, and they drink a good deal. It is not possible to trace any persistent improvement, either moral or material, in their lives, and if a religion which does not secure improvement fails, then success cannot be claimed for these churches. But, from day to day, these poor people are greatly helped by their connection with the Church; restrained, controlled and blessed in their rough lives by its care.

The German Catholics have a special church in Union Street, near St. Mary's, Whitechapel, which is filled every Sunday morning and evening with a very devout congregation, drawn largely from the working classes. The remarkable feature of this church is the bachelors' club which is connected with it, or with which it is connected, for the backbone of the mission seems to be the club. The full members are all unmarried men, mostly young. A married man can only be an

honorary member ; a rule made to avoid all chance of petticoat government. The club, which adjoins the church, is open every evening, but its activities are greatest on Sunday. On that day it opens at 10 a.m., closing at 11 o'clock for Mass ; and after the service the members enjoy a glass of Munich beer. Then some dine at the club, but the greater part go home. At 4 o'clock, when the priest gives a short address to the members, the club is again full, and amusements, billiards, &c., fill the time till 7, when the club again closes for the evening service. Afterwards ladies are admitted. The entertainments of the club include lectures, concerts and dramatic performances. The priest is its president. Perfect order is maintained. It is not a solitary institution, but to be found, we are told, wherever there are many German Catholics. More than a thousand of such clubs exist in various parts of the globe, affiliated in such fashion that to be a member of one is to be welcome at any other, wherever it may be. Amongst the members there is, no doubt, something of that mixture of class which seems to be always practicable under Catholicism.

There is also a church of this faith to serve the Irish Colony of Mile End Old Town. The Irish there are giving place to Jews, but the church still gathers a considerable congregation.

On the whole, among the various religious elements of this district, Roman Catholicism plays an important and satisfactory part. It makes no attempt at proselytizing. 'We have,' said one of the priests, 'more than enough to do in looking after our own people.'

## § 6

## CHARITABLE AGENCIES

In addition to the efforts of the directly religious and missionary institutions which have been described in a general way, and of which I have also given salient examples, there are some great charitable agencies connected with this district, in which the idea of religion is kept somewhat in the background.

This is so locally even with the Salvation Army, which, though it began its work in this neighbourhood and though its soldiers still march through the streets at times with drum and tambourine, is now of little importance as a religious influence; but has turned towards its 'social wing' the marvellous energies and powers of organization, and the devoted work it commands. The headquarters of the social wing are established in the very house in which General Booth gathered together his first body of adherents some thirty years ago, and in this building, or in the neighbourhood of it, various branches of social work have been established: the night shelters, the net into the meshes of which are first drawn the masses of derelict human beings, among whom the Army endeavours to effect its reclamations; the food depôts; the elevators (or workshops); the lighthouse, in which men live who have been selected for work in an elevator; and the poor man's metropole, which is a superior kind of lodging-house. There is also a shelter for women, and a labour bureau. To the headquarters of the social wing cases are sent from all over London, so that these organizations cannot be considered as local to the East End, and an account of them will come better later, when the problems with which they are concerned, or to which they give rise, will be more fully considered.

There are several other shelters besides those of the

Salvation Army. One large building, belonging to the Roman Catholics, provides lodging free, attracting day by day, sometimes quite early in the afternoon, a sad and listless crowd, the men at one gate, the women at another, waiting for the time of admission. At Medland Hall, Ratcliff, free accommodation is also provided. This shelter had an unenviable reputation, but is now under better regulation.\* Admission here is mainly by ticket, but it is well to be early, and before the doors open at six o'clock the applicants, standing in single file, extend for a long distance. In addition to lodging, those admitted receive half a pound of bread, with butter and coffee additional on Sunday. Each man has a bunk; of these there used to be 450, but the number has been cut down by the London County Council to 343, and now the enlargement of the

\* The following extract from the *Christian World* (January, 1901) gives the most recent statistics:—

“MEDLAND HALL.

“TENTH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION.

“The ‘Home of the Homeless’ and Medland Hall, Ratcliff, E., was first opened as a free shelter for destitute men on January 5th, 1891, and on Sunday a special birthday service was held to commemorate the ten years’ work. In one decade the ‘shelter’ has taken a unique place among the philanthropic efforts on behalf of the outcasts of London. For the first four years the admissions of men for shelter at the hall averaged 170,000 a year. Then they had no bunks to sleep in; last year 148,820 men were admitted and provided with separate beds and comfortable bedding. In all, during ten years nearly a million and a half of men have benefited by the hall, and over 300 tons of bread have been supplied. The figures for 1900 have just been compiled by Mr. E. Wilson Gates, the director of the Philanthropic Branch of the London Congregational Union. They are eloquent statistics, and go far to prove that Medland Hall is indeed a home for lost and starving men. \* \* \* \* \* The number of men helped was 12,896, giving each man an average of twelve nights in the hall. As a matter of fact 6155 used the hall for from two to six nights, while 836 were only once sheltered and fed; 8576 were turned away for lack of room; 104 men were provided for during their first week of employment, 23 were gratuitously supplied with surgical appliances, and 733 with articles of clothing. The largest proportion of the beneficiaries are men between the ages of 30 to 34 and 40 to 44, though 33 men of 70 and over sought refuge in the shelter. All trades and professions were represented, and every county in England had its representation in the year’s admissions. Ireland contributed 854, Scotland 635, and Wales 266; 245 men from 24 colonies and dependencies, and 773 foreigners from 26 countries were ‘entertained.’ The total expenditure was £940, or less than 1½d per man per night.”

building is projected. The bunks are supplied with pillow, blanket and mattress, all cased in American cloth for cleanliness, and a hinged flap at one end serves as bolster and at the same time forms a receptacle for boots and other articles which might be stolen while their owner is sleeping. The accommodation provided by the Salvation Army is very similar. In all the shelters some religious service is held.

The benefit that springs from the provision of free, or almost free, shelter for the homeless is open to very grave doubt. There can be no question that these institutions tend to foster and increase the class they serve, and tend also to aggravate its condition by concentration and congestion. There is a nomad population which comes and goes, pausing in London awhile before starting forth once more. Their number is capable of expansion or contraction, and the length of their stay in London may be longer or shorter. The needs of these people, and the fact that the chances of London life greatly attract and encourage those who are chronically 'dead broke,' are but poor reasons for providing in London special accommodation for them; especially if the result be, as it certainly is in Whitechapel, to inflict almost unmitigated evil upon the locality in which the shelters are situated. In such cases it becomes public policy to insist on as high a standard of accommodation for charitable or semi-charitable institutions as for those which work for profit, and to make that standard as high as possible. If the wandering and homeless class are discouraged, so much the better: if they still come, let the conditions under which they live be such as to raise rather than debase them.

The original idea no doubt was that whatever accommodation men were eager to accept must at least be better than what they would otherwise have to endure, and that thus the overcrowding complained of was in



itself a proof that all was well: room to lie down under a roof, even on a bare floor, was better than the cold damp of some doorstep or the shelter of a railway arch; and it was better for others as well as themselves that they should be gathered together, dirt, rags, insects, and all, rather than befoul the common staircases of tenement houses. The argument is delusive. The aim far too low. The special dangers of degrading forms of competition apply to charity quite as much as to industry, and call no less imperatively for intervention.

But in departing from the first idea, other difficulties are encountered. So long as the accommodation offered was only a trifle better than the cold comfort of the street, it could be free to all comers; but if improved, the difficulty of selection necessarily arises. We see it in the crowds waiting for hours outside the Roman Catholic shelter in Crispin Street, or in the ticket system adopted at Medland Hall. The difficulty is a real one and can perhaps best be met by active co-operation between private charity and the Poor Law. The evil is deep-seated, and a decrease in the numbers of those who seek such casual accommodation can only be brought about gradually; but to decide after investigation which cases are, and which are not, suitable for private assistance is, if seriously undertaken, by no means an impossible task. This is the first selection; and to deal with each case for the best, other selections follow.

The policy pursued by the Church Army in its Labour Homes, of which there are two here, is one of strict selection and individual care, and deserves commendation. But its story, like that of the Social Wing of the Salvation Army, does not belong particularly to East London, and even to the Homes in Whitechapel inmates come from all over London.

Attempts to improve the character of common lodging-houses by direct competition, like that of the

Victoria Homes founded by Lord Radstock, fall into line with the policy of selection. The aim is not to provide more cheaply for those who cannot afford a 'fourpenny doss,' but to provide something better for those who can. Action such as this is good as tending to raise the whole standard of lodging-house accommodation. The object is to teach men to value the decencies of life and to strengthen the hands of the local authorities in enforcing their observance. It is in this direction that the Salvation Army contributes its 'Poor Man's Metropole,' but in spite of its high-sounding title the aim here seems hardly ambitious enough. The right level is not easily hit. If the aim be too high or too low, it fails of its purpose. If too low, the men you desire to serve come, indeed, but their standard of life is not raised ; if too high, they do not come at all, and you serve a different class, who may perhaps lose rather than gain by adopting barrack life. The framing of the rules requires great judgment, and however strong the philanthropic and religious motives may be to which these improved houses generally owe their inception, the management should be primarily a matter of business. It is certainly best to avoid any display of religion.

Dr. Barnardo's institution for the housing and care of destitute children is an enterprise of a similar kind to those for the housing of the homeless, but the conception is far higher. Of it no one can say that the aim has been too low. It is beyond question the greatest charitable institution in London, or, I suppose, in the world, and its success has been deserved. The management has been stamped with the impress of a most remarkable personality and may not have been free from faults, but they have been the defects of its qualities. It is easy to cavil, but there are few charities in favour of which so much, and against which so little, can be said. In a notice of Dr. Barnardo's work

written ten or twelve years ago, I, somewhat alarmed at its rapid extension, expressed a fear lest, its assistance being counted upon, it should in the end become a cause of misery. Undoubtedly the danger exists, but it is recognised, and great care is taken to minimise it in the selection or rejection of applicants. The 'ever open door' is not held too widely open, it would be fatal if it were, and the more nearly the institution approaches its maximum growth financially, the more careful this selection is likely to become. Thus the institution has very permanent elements which justify continued public support. Children of all ages and both sexes are received, those afflicted in various ways, as well as those whose only disadvantage is their poverty, and they are drawn from several other large cities as well as from London. For those that can be best cared for in that way there are country homes, whilst for those who are willing to emigrate places are found in Canada. Dr. Barnardo has never any difficulty in finding situations for his boys and girls. The inmates of the homes may be roughly grouped in two divisions : those who come young, usually because of the death of one or both parents ; and those who come late, on an independent footing, having already tried life, and failed. By far the greater number are in the first of these divisions, the more difficult cases in the second.

Dr. Barnardo is one of those who have carried to perfection the art of public appeal for funds, and by these means he secures an income of about £150,000 a year. This art is the basis of most missionary and philanthropic enterprise ; not in East London only. It plays with wonderful skill on the tender hearts of all classes, and the religious sentiments of some, sounding every note. Its success has been so marvellous and so sustained that it is often and confidently attributed to the special favour of God. And so possessed are those who use these means by a sense of the goodness of

their ends, that they often, it may be unwittingly, make unscrupulous use of sensational language and exaggeration. The system has great dangers, and needs to be watched carefully from within as well as from without.

One of the most curious instances of its use is that by Mr. Atkinson, a Congregational minister, who is an 'expert' in begging by advertisement, and in this way collects in perfect good faith far more money than he can himself wisely spend in the relief of distress. His mission centre, situated in the outer ring, has already been mentioned, but he seeks his 'poor' far and wide; and other missionaries, carrying on their work in a smaller way, turn to him for assistance, which is freely given. His position is thus almost that of a voluntary charity agent. All is very honestly albeit not very wisely done.

Some of the begging missions publish accounts, and some do not. It is unnecessary to suppose that when no accounts are published the money is improperly used for purposes other than those mentioned in the appeals. Method in accounts is in many cases rather a question of temperament than of honesty, and even methodical accounts may sometimes conceal a loose administration. There are, undoubtedly, dangers, and the lynx eye of the Charity Organization Society is of great value in detecting and checking begging frauds, and in severely questioning those cases in which, though genuine work may be carried on, the missionary obtains an extremely good living from it.

In one form or another the feeding of the poor, and more especially of poor children, has, in this neighbourhood, assumed very large proportions. At most schools in poor districts, and that applies to nearly all the schools here, free breakfasts and dinners are arranged when required for necessitous children. It may be doubted whether this is done in the best way,

but it probably must be done in some way if the children are to be taught at all. It does not follow because children come ill-nourished that there is not food to be had at their homes, but the supply is probably irregular, and the mother perhaps neglectful or she may be occupied with her babies, or obliged to work for money. The children will then be given a piece of bread with jam, or margarine, or dripping, or it may be dry bread only for their meal; which they eat or throw away according to their humour, with the result that uneaten bread lies in the gutters of every poor street in London. If they are given pennies to spend they buy sweets. Sweet shops abound and prosper. If these children ran wild, sharing all the chances of bite and sup at home, they might do well enough as to food, and grow up into physically healthy creatures. But for children who have to attend school at stated hours and pass their standards, it becomes an impossible life. These children are at once fastidious and ill-fed. Porridge, if offered to a breakfastless child, is very likely to be refused; and if the home meals provide the least encouragement, the less appetising breakfast or dinner at school is gladly rejected.

In some cases a small charge is made, a farthing or a halfpenny for breakfast or a penny for dinner, a sum which scarcely covers the cost, but which all who can are expected to pay. The necessitous are then given free tickets. The plan has been systematized to some extent by the School Board, advantage being taken of voluntary effort. If well organized, and carried out on a large scale, it is quite likely that nice meals at very low prices could be supplied with profit to the caterer, and the children be far better and even more cheaply fed than from their parents' table. The system would then become a very useful adjunct to school life and would involve no charity except as regards those who had tickets given them.

The wholesale distribution of soup either gratis or at a nominal price is far more questionable than the provision of children's meals. It is a plan fitted for emergencies only, but the missions would have us believe that the emergency is chronic. In their appeals to the public they strike this note again and again. The body must be fed, they say, before the soul can be touched, and it is in the struggle for souls that this form of charity comes most to the front. Without the religious motive it could never be maintained. But so far from bringing the people into sympathy with religion it has the opposite effect, a result that is sometimes admitted even by those who find themselves unable to avoid doing the very things they know will do harm. 'Irreligion,' said one incumbent, 'is the result of all the bribery: we are all in it; church and chapel are equally bad. It begins with the children—buns to come to Sunday school, and so on; so that they grow up with the idea that the church is simply a milch cow for treats and charity.' This is a hard saying and overstates the truth, but points none the less to very serious dangers, and especially to that of alienating the class of men whose earnings are not large, but who maintain a sturdy independence and will run no risk of being 'tarred with the charitable brush.'

## § 7

### OTHER METHODS

It is very difficult to give any adequate idea of the extent of the religious and philanthropic effort that has been, and is, made in this district. No statistical device would be of much avail to measure the work done, and description fails to realize it. Great as the

effort is in many other parts of London, it is greatest here. Nowhere else are the leading churches so completely organized to cover the whole field of their work; and nowhere else are the auxiliary missions on so huge a scale. Money has been supplied without stint; the total expended is enormous; and behind and beneath it all, much of the work is sustained by the self-devotion of very many and the exalted enthusiasm of not a few. It can hardly be but that the sense of present help and kindly sympathy brought home to the people must do good, and that the world would be a blacker world without it. But these results are difficult to gauge. Much that is done seems rather to do harm than good, and on the whole all this effort results in disappointment and causes men to turn to other methods.

Whitechapel, St. George's, and Stepney have been the scene of a very great experiment in the reform of the Poor Law on the anti-out-relief side. These three Unions, covering a very considerable area and including a population that is in the aggregate equal to that of a large provincial town, constitute in effect the district with which we are now dealing. The experiment has been an almost unique attempt. When it began the people were not only very poor, but terribly pauperized, and the object was to instil independence and so to raise the standard of life. A generation has elapsed, and we can take stock of the results.

The men primarily responsible for this experiment have been Mr. John Jones, the chief Relieving Officer of the Stepney Union (now dead); Mr. Vallance, Clerk to the Whitechapel Board of Guardians\*; and Mr. A. G. Crowder, Guardian of St. George's-in-the-East; and they have had the co-operation of Mr. Albert Pell, the real apostle of their faith, who also was

\* Mr. Vallance has quite recently retired from office.

a Guardian at St. George's for many years. Their aim was to combat by every means in their power the tendency of the poor to depend on the rates, and the main lever to which they trusted in the pursuance of this object has been the denial of out-relief. The district, owing to the unusually small proportion of cases which from any point of view are suitable for out-relief, is well adapted for such an attempt, and moreover since it is part of their theory that private charity is much less injurious to the spirit of independence than parish aid, it has had the advantage (if it really be one) of being carried out contemporaneously with an unexampled flood of private benevolence. In this effort they have had the advantage also of close co-operation with the Charity Organization Society, for whose methods no greater opportunity could ever be offered.

Complete success has been achieved in reducing out-door relief without any corresponding increase in in-door pauperism. But to those who have advocated the principles which have produced these great results it is the more disheartening to find that they meet with no general acceptance. The example is not followed elsewhere, and even here the principle is not beyond the risk of abandonment. The continued presence and influence of the men I have named have been needed to prevent relapse, and at Stepney with the change of *personnel* there is already to some extent a change of policy.

Tested by the condition of the people, it is not possible to claim any great improvement. The people are no less poor, nor much, if at all, more independent. There are fewer paupers, but not any fewer who rely on charity in some form. Private charity defies control, and the work of the Charity Organization Society has, in spite of itself, become largely that of providing, under careful management, one more source



of assistance for those who would otherwise be obliged to apply to the Guardians. The 'Tower Hamlets' Pension Fund has also been specially established to the same end, and is worked under the same inspiration.

Success, however, there is, for although in their extreme development the ideas of the reformers may be impracticable, yet over the whole of London their influence can now be traced. So, too, with the parallel action of the Charity Organization Society; its methods are disliked, and its theories attacked; even those of the clergy who profess to adopt these theories constantly fail in carrying them out, and admit that this is so; yet the broad principle, which recognises the responsibility of the giver for the ulterior consequences of charitable gifts, is more and more generally accepted. Still, as regards this particular district, the reformed system of Poor Law administration and the attempted guidance of charity are, like the efforts of the missions, somewhat disappointing. All that can safely be said is that they take a place among many influences making slowly for amelioration.

Of these general influences the greatest of all is elementary education, which, however, presents here no special features, and embodies no special effort. It is here just exactly what it is everywhere in London, save that the Board schools meet a far greater proportion of the demand than in some other districts. It is probably to the effect of school training that such softening of manners as exists is mainly to be traced. But in this direction too, there have been great disappointments. We have seen how those engaged in religious or missionary enterprise turn for hope and encouragement to their work among the young. We have seen how each gathering of ragged children is expected to recruit a Sunday school, and each Sunday school a church. The educationalist too, in spite of continued failures, retains the hope that what is taught

in the day schools may be duly learnt, and what is learnt remembered when school is left; and he, too, seeks to keep some hold on the children by evening classes as do the religious bodies by means of young people's guilds, in continuation of the Sunday school, and with the same limited result of selecting a few and leaving the mass untouched. Like the rest, the educationalist clings to a belief in the efficacy of his gospel: he still has faith in the infusion of knowledge for raising the character of the people.

In each case, though not exactly according to their hopes, something is gradually won. The ragged rascal may never reach the Sunday school; the Sunday school children never join the church; the accomplishments of the fourth standard may be all forgotten, so that reading becomes difficult, and writing a lost art—but something still remains. Habits of cleanliness and of order have been formed; a higher standard of dress and of decency have been attained, and this reacts upon the homes; and when children who have themselves been to school become parents, they accept and are ready to uphold the system, and support the authority of the teachers, instead of being prone to espouse with hand and tongue the cause of the refractory child. Schoolmasters need no longer fear the tongue of the mother or the horsewhip of an indignant father.

Nor need this be all. The power for good to be found in the influence of masters and teachers is very great, and happily can be exerted irrespective of dogmatic basis, as to which in England agreement is hardly possible. This influence will leave its mark on the children and on their lives, even though religious observances fall into abeyance, and the little knowledge that has been acquired is forgotten. We have here, ready to our hand, a missionary band of extraordinary value, whose work pervades and underlies

all. Nor need it be feared that their work will conflict with more definite religious agencies. The Churches might indeed prefer to monopolize all education, but as things are ought to welcome the effect on the character as well as the minds of the children which springs from the inspiration of a good teacher, 'spreading the gospel of cleanliness and order.' School managers who take this view, though they may put forward no creed, will yet spare no pains, so far as the choice rests with them, to obtain masters and mistresses whose moral influence will be good, and by giving them support and sympathy endeavour to secure that the teaching shall be somewhat wider than the code, and deeper than inspections can plumb or examinations test. It would be a narrow and limited view of religion to suppose that such masters and mistresses will not be themselves religious, and that their teaching would not carry with it the elements of religion.

Another aim has found expression and become associated with the name of Toynbee Hall, and what Toynbee Hall is will be best understood if we record how it came to be. Its inception followed on the appointment of Canon Barnett to the living of St. Jude's. Under his guidance, and that of Mrs. Barnett, who has rendered constant assistance in her husband's work, this small East-End parish became a centre not only of great activity, but also of thought. Intimate relations with Dr. Jowett and with several of the remarkable men who came under his influence, led to their paying visits to St. Jude's, and the idea of a University Settlement in East London gradually took form. Of all these young men Arnold Toynbee, though in some respects a visionary, stood out as having the most suggestive and sympathetic mind. His death in the Spring of 1883, even more than his

life, helped to clinch the purpose of the rest, and it was decided to associate the new settlement, opened at the end of 1884, with his name. It has never connected itself with any political party or with any religious school. The key-note has been freedom of individual thought, and, as a corollary of this, corporate action on all controversial issues has been carefully avoided.

By the strict observance of a non-party and non-sectarian attitude, Toynbee Hall both gains and loses. If it had some definite platform on which to take its stand, there might be more visible effect produced without, but there would be less within. The place would not attract the same class of men either as residents or for its organizations, and the loss would outweigh the gain. Now there is a general recognition that all who come are free to act as well as think for themselves.

The absence of concentration, and the consequent loss of apparent effectiveness, make it not easy to say in a word what Toynbee Hall has accomplished. The direct and expressed objects were to 'provide education and the means of recreation and enjoyment' for the people; 'to inquire into the condition of the poor and to consider and advance plans calculated to promote their welfare,' and thus thought and sympathy were to be brought to bear upon the conditions of life in a working-class and poor neighbourhood. In a great variety of ways these objects have been attained, but indirectly also the influence exercised by the settlement has been very considerable. As pioneer settlement its advice is continually sought and its experience consulted; strangers desiring to study the problems of poverty, of industry, and of crowded City life, are hospitably entertained, and are helped in their researches by the residents, some of whom are themselves ever on the same quest. Moreover, Toynbee

Hall has gradually formed traditions, and through them has acquired a widely-recognised, and very persistent, individuality of its own. In essence, perhaps, there was nothing very original in the fundamental principles adopted, which were merely 'a new phase' of 'neighbourliness and goodwill,' an expression of very simple forms of 'civic duty,' re-emphasizing the claims of old and valuable ideas. People, however, were roused to think that some new discovery had been made as to the way in which social obligations could be met, and thus these ideas have often come to be associated with Toynbee Hall in the public mind, with the result that perhaps its greatest achievement lies in the fact that it has caused many people in many parts of the world to consider and seek to think out and apply these ideas afresh for themselves.

Toynbee Hall, in addition to carrying on its work of organizing classes, lectures and conferences, fostering educational societies and social clubs, providing concerts and entertainments, and affording a centre where 'East End' and 'West End' can enjoy a common hospitality, and where working class leaders first obtained social recognition, has also been connected with all local efforts made for improved administration, whether in Local Government and the Poor Law, in school management, or in the guidance of charity in assisting the poor. The first residents carried the work in many directions with almost equal ability. As each effort in turn has been put to the test of experience, some have languished or lapsed, but others have greatly flourished.

With the variety of organizations that have been evolved, a large number of pupil and other elementary school teachers have been always associated, and it is not the least of the claims that may be advanced on behalf of Toynbee Hall that it has done much to teach our teachers.

The settlement has, at times, been attacked as irreligious, but the attack is unjust. In pursuance of the ideas of its founders it necessarily abstains from definite religious teaching, so much so that even ethical lectures, at one time given on Sunday evenings, have been abandoned. Yet most of the residents are religiously-minded men, and if many of them do not attend any place of worship, yet must the self-sacrificing work they do, and the spirit in which it is done, be recognised as a proof of the most real religion and a definite witness to God.

## § 8

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

We have in this chapter to speak of Whitechapel and St. George's-in-the-East, and of Limehouse, as completing our account, begun in Outer East London, of local administration in what is now the Borough of Stepney.

Parts of Whitechapel were built over at least as far back as 1600. Spitalfields was ready as an occupied area to receive the French Huguenots after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1683. During the last half of the eighteenth century building was active from Goodman's Fields to Stepney and from Whitechapel Road to Shadwell, and excepting Goodman's Fields themselves and some parts east of the New Road, almost the whole of Whitechapel and St. George's, and a considerable part of Shadwell, had been built over before 1812. Thus by far the greater part of the district here dealt with has the traditions of long occupancy. There has been no mushroom growth; such influences as have been at work have

had to make themselves felt on alignments planned long ago, on old structures, and on a long-established population.

The general street plan has remained much as it is for the last fifty years. It was in 1848 that Commercial Street was made, and it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of this improvement on the later structural changes in Whitechapel. Previously, the present wide street had been a narrow lane, approached, I am told, as George Yard is to-day, by a covered archway, and leading to a maze of courts and alleys, some of which still retain their past evil name, but all of which are now, at any rate, accessible and known. It is in the district thus opened up that have been erected a large part of the block dwellings, now so conspicuous and objectionable a feature in the locality; until, at the present time, about sixteen thousand out of the total population of eighty thousand in Whitechapel are thus housed. The other salient alteration, the cutting through of Commercial Road to the High Street, took place rather earlier, but still well within the memory of many living. Before this the great thoroughfare of our time bifurcated ignominiously at the bottom of Church Lane.

In recent years the opening of the Tower Bridge has increased the importance of Commercial Street for heavy traffic, and has hurried on the wide northern continuation of Middlesex Street. The full effects of this last improvement cannot yet be seen, but a beginning has been made in the clearances in what is known as the Bell Lane area. Middlesex Street, the Petticoat Lane of old, is now an omnibus route on week-days, but is crowded from side to side on Sunday morning, when, combined with Wentworth Street, it forms the greatest street market in London. The market of the Jews themselves is in Wentworth Street, where day by day, except on their Sabbath, they are

the buyers as well as the sellers. In Middlesex Street on Sundays it is the Gentiles chiefly who buy.

In Whitechapel a certain number of small shopkeepers still live over their places of business in the more important thoroughfares, and among the smaller retailers a larger proportion ; a considerable number, too, of the smaller master men in local industries still live in the neighbourhood ; but, speaking generally, the population is now working class, and the outward movement of the middle classes can bring little further change : it is an accomplished fact and for the past ten years, indeed, things have been much as they are to-day. In St. George's the level reached is even more flat and dead. Whitechapel lives its multi-coloured life on the borders of great highways that are among the busiest and most lively in London ; arteries leading so directly from the heart of things that the throb of the City would almost reach its ears were it not for its own hubbub. Parts are sombre and grey enough, but the High Street, the Jew's market, and Petticoat Lane on Sunday are among the most kaleidoscopic sights that London has to show. A walk down to St. George's is however always, unless one happens to strike Watney Street on the way, a passing into comparative gloom. There is a feeling of going away from life. It is off the main route, and monotony reigns. The changes that have occurred have been all in the direction of uniformity. The life that springs from river and docks has become less active ; the proportion of sea-going population that spends its money here is a diminishing quantity ; the work in the warehouses is falling into the hands of a more permanent body of men ; the casual labourer, who just maintains a precarious livelihood at the docks, is a less common figure ; St. George's is becoming at once more monotonous, and more respectable.



In both Whitechapel and St. George's overcrowding is the main difficulty of the local authorities. Much of the oldest and worst property has given place to what are described as 'splendid new buildings,' but the population is denser than ever, and the buildings are not by any means all admirable. 'Sometimes' (says the medical officer of Whitechapel) 'they are constructed so as to allow light and air to permeate the rooms, and sometimes not.' Even some of those built in earlier days with a philanthropic aim, have now a bad name. The result of the multiplication of block dwellings is to create authorized crowding, of which the evils are serious; and, where they have been over-run by foreign Jews, the laws are evaded, the crowding that results reaches an excessive point, and very primitive habits prevail. The most unsatisfactory spots are invariably due to bad landlords. If the owners are indifferent or acquiescent, and the occupiers desirous of evading the law, the authorities are almost powerless to prevent overcrowding. They do their best, but frankly admit failure.

The clearances and rebuilding have thus not cured, and may even have aggravated, crowding, but still the effect on the character of the inhabitants has been good. 'As poor as ever, but old rookeries destroyed, black patches cleared away, thieves and prostitutes gone, a marvellous change for the better,' is the opinion of one as to the results in his neighbourhood. In Flower and Dean Street and Thrawl Street, there has been a similar change. Ten years ago these rivalled Dorset Street in notoriety, but now, though some of the old houses with the old class of occupant remain, the streets are lined with block dwellings and the inhabitants are poor, but respectable Jews.

Much has still to be done, and the large number of poor common lodging-houses remains not the least of the difficulties of the district. As regards overcrowding,

the clergy, though face to face with terrible cases, dare not rouse agitation which might result in evictions and cause their visits to be looked at with suspicion by people who have no wish to be disturbed. Here and there are areas which might be dealt with as insanitary, but usually the evil is crowding and little else. Even in Great Pearl Street the houses in themselves are not insanitary.

As to the great general disadvantages of block dwellings there is a consensus of opinion. They may be a necessary evil, but none the less, particularly in a district so built over as Whitechapel, they are an evil, bearing with especial hardship on child-life, and badly needing the mitigation supplied by public gardens within easy reach. Of these there are very few. Whitechapel has only two small open spaces: a recreation ground adjoining the Infirmary in Vallance Road, and the disused churchyard of Spitalfields, which has been suitably adapted and is much used. In St. George's a pleasant garden has been made out of the old Wesleyan burial ground with part of the parish churchyard. The expense was met privately. There is also a recreation ground in Wapping laid out by the London County Council, but too remote to be much frequented even when the band plays. The value of these spaces is greatest for children; for young people as well as for adults the bright streets have far greater attraction. Among available resorts we may also count the picturesquely situated Tower Gardens, and the Tower Wharf affords a short but splendid river promenade. Apart from the crowded dwellings the conditions of health are good, as is evidenced by the steadily declining death-rate.

Public baths and washhouses, as well as Free Libraries, have been provided both for Whitechapel and St. George's. All are much used, and in the case of the St. George's baths enlargements are spoken

of. Whitechapel has also its Natural History Museum, and a permanent Picture Gallery has recently been added to crown the work of the loan exhibition which, for nearly twenty years, Canon and Mrs. Barnett had been able to arrange for the benefit and delight of thousands. In the whole of these enterprises public spirit has been greatly assisted by private generosity, the district being singularly fortunate in this respect. Electric lighting is the latest municipal development in Whitechapel.

Limehouse, where both death-rate and birth-rate are very high, suffers from the presence of a good deal of old bad property still remaining on the long line of river frontage, or to be found in the dark places which figure on our map: damp, unwholesome houses, standing below the present level of the streets. Such dwellings almost defy attempts to keep them in proper sanitary condition. Happily some of the worst spots have been removed, either entirely or partly, by private effort or business requirements; and two considerable schemes of demolition promoted by the local authority and assisted by the London County Council, are now being proceeded with. Meanwhile it is suggestive that a public mortuary is almost the sole building which witnesses to municipal enterprise. There are, however, a number of small public gardens, and the streets are well cleansed and maintained.

## § 9

## SUMMARY

Besides the traditional poverty of these parts, we have noted the outward movement of the better-to-do classes, the influence of the City and the increase of non-residential buildings, the erection of block dwellings, the spread of the Jews and the movement further East of the shipping trades; and have traced their consequences in the condition of the people. Local administration has been quickened in its use of the powers of the law for the checking of overcrowding, the closing or improvement of insanitary property, and the registration and inspection of tenement rooms, and in its action as to the cleansing of the streets. The Poor Law has been strictly administered and has worked in harmony with organized charity in dealing with poverty. Wages have tended upwards. The trade union revival of 1889 has not been sustained in any great strength in the interest of unskilled labour, but the Dock Company, by its revised regulations, which were in great measure a consequence of the strike, has done much to make work more regular. The Sweating Commission inquiry, and the stronger East-End staff of Home Office inspectors; the more sympathetic labour policy of local public boards, and the greater responsibility admitted by other employers, have also had their effect. These influences are all making for improvement; and meanwhile the underlying forces of education render each successive generation more ready to form and to respond to a livelier and healthier public opinion. Slowly, by the combined effect of many agencies, the process goes on. In spite of the wretched beings who sleep each night on the doorsteps in Commercial Street, and the worse figures which parade its pavements; in spite of the hells of Dorset Street, and the low life

and foul language of the courts ; in spite of the poverty and drunkenness, domestic uncleanness, ignorance and apathy, that still prevail—things are surely making for the better in Whitechapel and St. George's.

It is all a process of tinkering. Improvement is not coming structurally from a Haussmann, or socially and industrially by the light of master-minds, nor is it attempted by the dangerous road of revolution. Few big things are done. But amelioration there has been. Ten years is enough to show it, but if we go back further it becomes the more evident, and those who have worked here longest agree that there has been an especially marked change for the better in the behaviour and habits of the lowest social stratum. Such scenes of unmitigated savagery as old inhabitants have witnessed are unknown now. The police have far less trouble in maintaining order.

There is, it is true, a large class who must be regarded as outcasts, for whom the policy of sanitary regulation, of inspection, even of harrying, seems to be the only resource, and who must be regarded, in the mass, as hopeless subjects of reform. But although this *residuum*, with the more uniform poverty found over the whole district, and the tendency to increased crowding, are constant sources of difficulty, it is generally admitted that the bad slums are becoming less numerous, and that the beneficial influences at work more than counteract those which make for decline.

Except among the homeless, who may almost be said to trade on their own wretchedness, there is at present little extreme poverty ; but 'the poor are always with us' and, except as regards the Jews, who are certainly better off than they were, things have tended to a uniform level, lower rather than higher than the average of ten years ago. It is likely that this has been the tendency for a much longer period : less dire destitution on the one hand ; and on the other,

smaller, and continually smaller, admixture of the middle and even of the upper working class.

We have here a population of some 150,000 individuals, comprising Jews and Christians, foreigners and Englishmen. Of them a small minority are shopkeepers, or professionally employed, or employers of labour; and a vast majority are working class: artisans, mechanics, semi-skilled labourers and riverside workers; tailing down into casuals of the worst degree: larrikin, loafer, and thief; and we have indicated the influences that are being brought to bear on them, not only collectively, but also those that have conscious reference to the individual—to what is being done to relieve the poor and nurse the sick; to amuse and to instruct; to teach the principles of good conduct in life and good management in the home; and to kindle the fires of religion.

In what sense these attempts fail, and to what extent they succeed, I have tried to show. The failure is more apparent than the success, yet that the success lies deeper than the failure I believe. Too much has been looked for; and much is claimed that is not won. It is these ill-grounded and erroneous anticipations that make failure loom so large. The success achieved does not take the shape that was expected and passes unnoticed.

## CHAPTER II

### BETHNAL GREEN, HAGGERSTON, AND PART OF SHOREDITCH

#### § 1

##### THE BOUNDARY STREET AREA

CROSSING the barrier formed by the Great Eastern Railway, we pass into another world. We leave behind us the floating population of common lodging-houses and night shelters, the low women of the 'furnished rooms,' and the foul but thriving poverty of the Jews. We are no longer struck by the foreign appearance of the streets; we are conscious of a different moral atmosphere; things are in some ways better, but in other ways worse; the people are more independent, but rougher mannered; and their poverty is certainly greater.

There is here no quarter quite so low as Great Pearl Street or Dorset Street, with the adjacent courts, in Whitechapel, but, on the other hand, for brutality within the circle of family life, perhaps nothing in all London quite equalled the old Nichol Street neighbourhood. Under the pseudonym of 'Summer Gardens,' a portion of it was described by me in the pages of a previous volume.\* It must be admitted

\* See 1st Series, Vol. II., pp. 94-101.

that the place deserved destruction. A district of almost solid poverty and low life, in which the houses were as broken down and deplorable as their unfortunate inhabitants; it seemed to offer a very good opportunity for rebuilding on some entirely new plan, such as might provide light and air, and possibilities of welfare and health for all. The area, some thirteen acres, was 'scheduled' by the County Council; a scheme was drawn up; powers were obtained from Parliament, the money borrowed, and the work put in hand. The result was a disturbance of the population comparable, on a smaller scale, to that produced in Whitechapel by the inroad and spread of the Jews, but with the marked difference that, while those who preceded the Jews have gone and left no trace, those who have been displaced in the Boundary Street area by the London County Council scheme of reconstruction still, for the most part, remain in the neighbourhood.

As, street by street, the inhabitants were turned out, they invariably sought new homes as near as possible to the old. Accommodation was provided in the new buildings, which from time to time were opened as the demolition proceeded; and in designing these buildings trouble was taken to suit them to the special needs of the displaced people, room being provided for costers' barrows and workshops for cabinet-makers and others; while the rents were put as low as would cover working charges, and meet the interest and sinking fund on the money borrowed. But all to no purpose. The various expenses incurred in effecting the clearance had been enormous, and it may be that too much was yielded to the desire to build dwellings that should at once be a credit to the London County Council and an example to others. At any rate, the cost was too great, the rents too high, and, in addition, the regulations to be observed under the new conditions, demanded more orderliness of



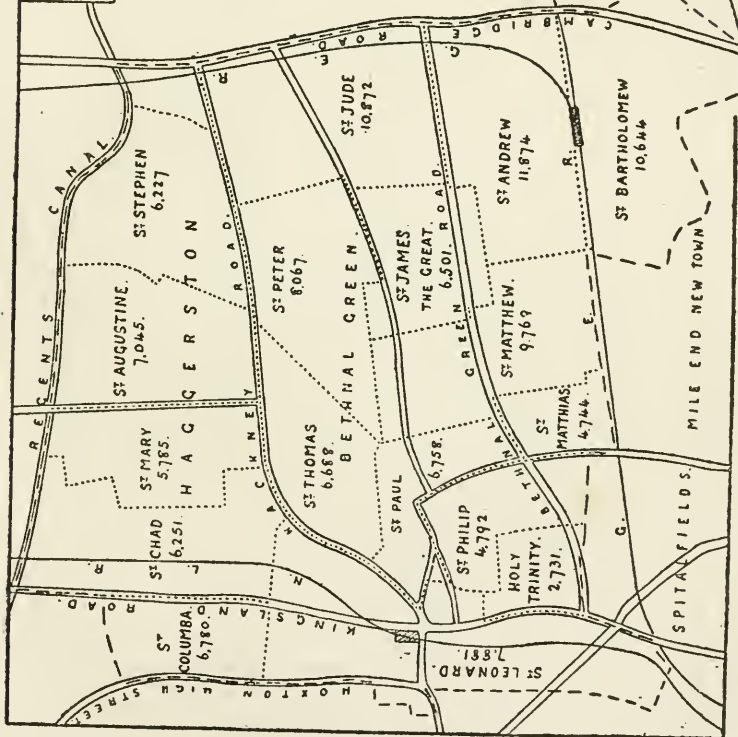
**SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.  
BETHNAL GREEN & HAGERSTON.  
VOL. II., CHAPTER II.**

POPULATION [1891] OF  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES.

HAGERSTON.	6,720
ST COLUMBA	6,461
ST CHAD	6,110
ST MARY	6,490
ST AUGUSTINE	6,180
ST STEPHEN	9,077
ST LEONARD, SHOREDITCH.	
BETHNAL GREEN NORTH.	3,092
HOLY TRINITY	6,645
ST PHILIP	6,099
ST PAUL	5,929
ST THOMAS	7,385
ST PETER	6,148
ST JAMES THE GREAT	10,818
ST JUDE	
BETHNAL GREEN SOUTH.	
ST MATTHIAS	5,166
ST MATTHEW	8,486
ST ANDREW	12,060
ST BARTHOLOMEW	10,854

TOTAL [1891]-123,720  
DECREASING TO [1901]-123,609  
(SEE FIGURES ON MAP)

FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP



# STATISTICS bearing on the AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 6. Described in Chapter II. (Vol. II.).

## CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

POPULATION IN			Increase or Decrease.		
1881.	1891.	1901.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.	
131,831	131,253	130,658	- 0.4 %	+ 0.1 %	
Density of Population.					
1891.	1901.	Age and Sex in 1891.			
PERSONS PER ACRE.	200'6	Acg.	Males.	Females.	Together
Under 5 years	5 & under 15 yrs	— 20 "	9,142	9,518	18,660
— 25 "	— 35 "	— 45 "	15,384	15,748	31,131
— 55 "	— 65 "	65 and over	6,703	6,629	13,332
— 79	9'2	Totals	5,891	6,139	12,030
NUMBER OF ACRES.	623		10,129	9,809	19,938
			7,610	7,625	15,235
			5,014	5,310	10,324
			2,817	3,326	6,143
			1,822	2,577	4,399
			64,572	66,681	131,253

NOTE.—The area included in the Sketch Map comprises the Registration sub-districts of BETHNAL GREEN NORTH and BETHNAL GREEN SOUTH, HAGGERSTON south of the Regent's Canal, and the ecclesiastical parish of St. LEONARD'S, SHOREDITCH. In compiling these statistics, the whole of Haggerston is included and St. Leonard's parish omitted. North and South Bethnal Green were increased under the London Government Act (1899) by about thirty acres, but the number of inhabited houses decreased in the decade 1891-1901. For a more detailed statement of the Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

## SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

SEX.		BIRTHPLACE.		INDUSTRIAL STATUS.		TOTAL HEADS.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	Neither.
24,405	4,858	21,933	7,330	2,201	21,168	5,894
83 %	17 %	75 %	25 %	7 %	73 %	20 %
Constitution of Families.						
HEADS.		Others Occupied.		Unoccupied.		TOTAL IN FAMILIES.
29,263	(1'0)	31,395	(1'07)	68,130	(2'33)	129,383
						(4'42)

## SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION according to Rooms Occupied or Servants Kept.

	PERSONS.		PER CENT.
	Unoccupied.	Servants.	
4 or more persons to a room	12,526	9'6	Crowded
3 & under 4	17,281	13'2	52'6 %
2 & " 3	39,062	29'8	
1 & " 2	34,291	26'1	
Less than 1 person to a room	3,496	2'6	
Occupying more than 4 rooms	19,086	14'6	
4 or more persons to 1 servant	2,146	1'6	Not
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	664	'5	Crowded
All others with 2 or more servants	146	'1	47'4 %
Servants in Families	685	'5	
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	1,870	1'4	
Total.	131,253	100	
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889)			45'4 %
" in Comfort			54'6 %

behaviour than suited the old residents. The result is that the new buildings are occupied by a different class, largely Jews, and that the inhabitants of the demolished dwellings have overrun the neighbouring poor streets, or have sought new homes further and further afield, as section after section was turned adrift.

Everywhere these people are recognised as coming from the 'Nichol,' and everywhere they have brought poverty, dirt and disorder with them, and an increase of crowding, the rooms previously occupied by one family having had to serve for two. Doubtless most of those whose places they have taken have moved further out to the North or East, but not a few have come to the new buildings, and may perhaps still maintain some slight connection with the parishes they have left, just as those of the inhabitants of the 'Nichol,' who still live near, are said to do in some cases with their old school and mission centres. Thus, to some extent, a curious shuffling of the population has been effected.

If we try to measure the results, the destruction of the old streets and buildings stands as so much to the good, and so does the dispersion of the inhabitants. The failure to re-house these people in the new buildings might have been anticipated, but it must be remembered that the scheme was carried through in the earlier, more experimental, and, perhaps, more sanguine days of the Council. The intention was to build improved dwellings for a low class of people; the result has been to bring in an entirely different class. Those who cling to the original plan may think success could have been won if the ideal had been a little less high and the buildings less expensive; while those who abandon any notion of rehousing the displaced, may feel that the new buildings might have been better adapted to the general needs of the neighbourhood; but both

alike demand that, by some means, the rents should be lower.

It is undeniable that the scheme was weighed down by expense ; and probable that an aim less exalted and more practical would have been of greater advantage to the neighbourhood. As to the best methods of municipal action in these matters I hope to say something later. In this case, though the cost was very great and the results not what were hoped for, a net benefit has undoubtedly resulted. But it is a question whether an equal benefit might not have been gained in some more gradual, less disturbing, and less costly way. However it be done, but most of all if it be done in a wholesale manner, the destruction of any area of bad property requires to be accompanied by exceptional care on the part of the local authority in the control of adjacent poor streets so that their deterioration may be prevented as far as possible, and in this case there is no sign that the need for such care was even considered.

The work of religion among the rough population within and adjacent to the 'Nichol' has been and is exceptionally difficult, and even the principal attempts made must be accounted very largely failures.

The Congregationalists maintain a mission and a large ragged school. The school is attended mainly on Sunday evening, when some six hundred of the poorest of the children are gathered in. Classes for those not quite so poor are held on week-nights. The mission has a club for young men of the better sort, with a gymnasium, and classes for technical teaching. It has also its mothers' meeting, temperance society and Band of Hope, but all these are on a small scale, and the religious services are very sparingly attended. The missionary in charge does not in fact claim any marked spiritual results, but recognises an effort on

the part of the poor to raise themselves in appearance. Those of them who attend the services become more respectable, more particular as to cleanliness, and better dressed. Another mission, situated not in but very near to this area, is that of Miss Annie MacPherson, who has worked here for forty years. This lady is best known in connection with the training and emigration of destitute children, but that part of her work is located in Hackney. Here in Bethnal Green there are large Sunday schools, held both afternoon and evening, the latter always implying a very poor set of children; and special classes for young men and women, together with various other directly charitable efforts, all bound up with the preaching of the Gospel in the mission hall, and out of doors in the Bird Fair of Sclater Street every Sunday.

Also near by, but a little away from the worst district, the Baptists have a mission, with a strong staff of voluntary workers drawn from the congregation of the Shoreditch Tabernacle. The children who attend its afternoon school belong to decent working people, and however short of money this class may be at times, their children are always well turned out. 'It is the pride of the mothers' that this should be so. In the evening, those come who may not be more poor, but are certainly less well cared for. The mission devotes special attention to cripples, and flowers are taken to children lying sick in hospital. Moreover, to crown all, the Gospel service on Sunday evening commands a fair attendance of adults. Among the strictly social enterprises of this mission is a provident society, with a turnover of no less than £3000 per annum. The society was started at the request of some of the men who objected to loan clubs which meet at public-houses. This tends to show that the work of the mission is carried on mainly amongst a class very much above the lowest. As

regards these—the people for whose sake especially the mission was established—it probably has little effect. But good work is done. This is only one out of several organizations having their root in the Shore-ditch Tabernacle.

Turning now to the Church of England, we find in connection with it the best known, and in its own way the most effective piece of work in this neighbourhood. It was on a spot adjoining the now demolished area that Mr. Osborne Jay built his famous club and church, the church, as is the case with some other mission-buildings, being over the club. The same plan may be found in some Italian monastery, set upon the crest of a hill, where the sacred edifice crowns the whole, and where the monks take (or once took) their recreation in the galleries beneath. But here the resemblance ends, for the members of this club are no monks, and their feet seldom if ever tread the stairs that lead to the church above. The church is small, but well worth visiting, being beautiful alike in design and in decoration, while the service, 'very high, very bright, very short,' is such as appeals strongly to the imagination, with little strain on the attention. Those who attend are not numerous, but they form a genuine congregation of quite poor people.

Connected with the church is a large Sunday school, and not much more. Mr. Jay's greatest efforts have been directed to the management of the club, in which for several years he almost lived, and to the care of a lodging-house for men, and otherwise to visiting and becoming further acquainted with his strange parishioners. As to charity, he gives very little. The 'Nichol,' he says, has been overdone with religion and relief. His own aim has rather been to penetrate the lives of his people. At the club he has not shrunk from associating even with criminals.

The story has been told, and over told, but the work has been a very real effort to take the Church to these people since they certainly will not come to the Church.

It is said that in this neighbourhood, as in Whitechapel and St. George's, there has been some diminution in brutality. Thieving still is an every-day offence, and burglary not unknown, but crimes of violence have become more rare. This at least is something to the good.

Mr. Jay's clerical neighbours do not much approve of his methods, and go their own ways. At St. Philip's, which divides with Mr. Jay's parish the demolished area, there were formerly two thousand children in the Sunday schools, but the number has fallen to seven hundred. The congregations, too, have decreased, but they were never large. As to their parishioners, the clergy admit desperate poverty, but deny any abnormal development of either vice or crime. The place, they say, never was so bad as it has been painted. Those who have left it have benefited, so far as this can be tested by the appearance of such as have come back to pay a visit to their old haunts, but those left behind are as poor as ever. The work of St. Philip's Church has been practically confined to the children, unless we may count as work charitable gifts, distributed seemingly without much discrimination. If we may judge by the scatterings of rice on the steps it is a great church for marriages.

There is a women's settlement in this parish known as St. Hilda's, but of which the full title is "The Incorporated Cheltenham Ladies' College Guild Settlement." Formerly it was in St. Andrew's parish, and shared with Oxford House and St. Margaret's House the work in that neighbourhood. It moved in 1898 to its present quarters, and now finds its local sphere of usefulness here and in the adjoining parishes of

Shoreditch. It seems to be a very active and well-conducted organization. In addition to a large number of residents, some regularly established and others coming for a few months or weeks in the year, some other ladies help in the work, who do not reside. The work done includes district visiting, Sunday-school teaching, and charity organization; Board School, country holiday and club management; and classes for invalid children and for pupil teachers—in fact all the operations usually undertaken in these cases to support and supplement the task of the parish churches. One resident has been elected a Poor Law Guardian. These ladies set an example of simple, sober, unsensational method, and the settlement becomes a natural training school for those who desire to learn how best to serve the poor.

## § 2

### OTHER PARTS OF BETHNAL GREEN

Ecclesiastically Bethnal Green seems to have been exceptionally unfortunate. Some sixty years ago, a large population having grown up, and St. Matthew's being apparently the only church, a special effort was made by Bishop Blomfield to "supply the need." Money was raised in the City in a moment of enthusiasm, not greatly guided by wisdom, and was followed by indiscriminate building and unsuitable appointments, for which the district has paid the penalty. 'Churches were dumped down. Bricks and mortar were relied on instead of living agents.' There was indeed wasted effort to such an extent that even now 'remember Bethnal Green' is apt to be thrown in



the teeth of those who try to inaugurate any great movement in the City on behalf of the Church. In a few cases the appointments were scandals or became such, and one or two of the worst of these just trail across the path of the inquiry upon which we have been engaged. But absenteeism and apathy rather than actual scandal were the more common result of the hollowness of this attempt made 'to supply the need for churches.'

In all this there has been a great change in recent years. St. Paul's and St. Matthias', which adjoin the Boundary Street area, have been worked in a very painstaking manner, and at St. Matthew's further east the amount of energy recently displayed has been exceptional. This parish had for a long time been neglected, and when Canon Ingram (now Bishop of London) became rector an entirely fresh start had to be made. The aim, as with Mr. Osborne Jay, was first of all to get to know the people. The work began (very much as did that of Mr. Ditchfield and his vicar in Holloway) with parties for men in the rectory garden. This was in 1895. About three hundred were invited at a time, the invitations being 'by streets,' and of the three hundred men asked, about eighty used to come. There were nine of these gatherings, covering the whole parish. At the same time a kind of religious census was taken, and it was found that only about one in eighty of the men went either to church or chapel, a proportion on which a more recent census shows no great improvement. Systematic visiting of the people was made the basis of the new work, the visitors being drawn mainly from Oxford House, of which the rector was head, or from St. Margaret's House, the ladies' settlement. At the time of our inquiry, other parish activities were being gradually brought into shape, the most noteworthy being a graduated series of

clubs for boys, lads, and young men. The relief of poverty, which almost everywhere goes with visiting, was being carefully controlled by a special committee, and the amount disbursed was not large; but the visiting had led, it was said, to the recognition by the people that in those connected with parish work they had real friends. Very fair congregations gathered in the church, which formerly was quite empty, but a large proportion of those who came had been attracted from outside. Thus the success achieved or likely to be achieved, does not differ here from elsewhere; but the change from the inertness of the past is noteworthy; and if unattainable religious ideals are laid aside, may be accepted with satisfaction as a great gain. On this modest basis, and without illusions, the influence of the Church becomes a great power for good.

Of the other parishes lying between Bethnal Green Road and Hackney Road it is unnecessary to speak in detail. All have empty churches, and the general attitude of the people is that of complete indifference. In his appeals for money the vicar of one of these parishes speaks of his people as 'unable to do much in this direction because poor and living from hand to mouth,' as if they were moved by the slightest desire to do anything at all, or as if the wealth of the Indies, if poured out, would bring them one step nearer in spirit. A few come to church, and many more (it is rather curiously put) 'stay away because they cannot get anything by coming'—that is, in the way of relief. Here the ritual is high, and early communion made almost an obligation. In another case, with an absentee vicar (a scandalous story into the merits of which I cannot go), lack of lay assistance as well as of money is complained of. The curate-in-charge fails to satisfy the deaconesses who used to work for him. His Christian behaviour is too lax in

their eyes, the fact being that, like Mr. Jay, he does not shrink from stepping down to the level of his people in the desire to enter their lives. He will play billiards or box with the men, and for years has maintained a dancing class for both sexes, and given parties every winter, with excellent result, it is claimed, in raising the moral tone of the young people. In a third parish, where, too, there is a curate-in-charge, we find again an empty church, but a full Sunday school, and much difficulty in obtaining workers from outside. But everywhere it is claimed that those touched, and especially the communicants, are real Christians, ready to face ridicule and scoffing for their faith's sake.

In all these parishes the services of the Church, with whatever difference of ritual, are well given. It does indeed seem strange that the mere attraction of warmth, and light, and music should have so little effect; and one is at times almost driven towards the conclusion that there must be something actually repellant to the people in the pretensions of religion or in the associations of Christian worship.

We come finally to St. James the Great, and here at the time of our inquiry the condition of things was still a disgrace. Happily this is altered now. At this, the notorious Red Church, marriages, which by an old endowment were almost gratuitous (the actual charge was sevenpence), formed the only activity, except that the late incumbent maintained a small congregation by doles given in church. A new start has now been made and seems likely to be successful. Perhaps it may be said that, the worse things have been, the more hopeful the outlook becomes.

The laxity and unworthiness of the Church in this parish has been accompanied by considerable effort on the part of the Unitarians and the Society of Friends. The work of both is essentially of a mission character, drawing funds and workers from

other quarters, and, beyond attendance at mothers' meetings and Sunday schools, little response is won from the neighbourhood. The Friends have a small adult school, but its members come mostly from a distance. They do not attempt house to house visiting, not being welcome (they find) 'unless bringing something.' The tramps and vagrants who used to fill the front seats of their meeting on Sunday evening, have been got rid of since indiscriminate giving has been checked ; but if this class falls below, there are also those who hold themselves above the need of Divine worship, for in this district, prosperity, it is pointed out, as well as poverty, goes against religion. The Unitarians, among whom membership is based solely on a money subscription, are definitely constituted as a society with missionary objects and are closely connected with a leading Unitarian Church at Hampstead. All the ordinary agencies are employed, and the religious services at the mission are attended by small numbers of respectable working-class people. Thus they are neither more nor less successful than the orthodox, and their success is practically of the same character.

Activity among Nonconformists is not confined to the neglected parish of St. James the Great. In St. Thomas' parish the Wesleyans have a mission overflowing with energy. The work was started nine years ago in a time-honoured, but almost deserted church, in the Hackney Road, and to it large congregations are attracted. They have day schools as well as Sunday schools. A powerful brass-band assists the services, both indoors and out, and 'cottage meetings' are held in the poor streets. A 'medical missionary,' a 'people's lawyer,' and other popular devices are employed to reach the people. Their visitors, going from door to door in the poorest streets, 'meet other visitors whichever way they go.' They give what they can, bread

and coal tickets, blankets in winter, soup and groceries. The Charity Organization Society has not a favourable opinion of their doings in these ways, but into all they do they import a seemingly abiding enthusiasm which has a marvellous effect. Of their method, its power and success, and its place as a religious influence, we shall have more to say in the next two chapters.

With this remarkable success may be contrasted the position of the Congregationalists who pursue their old ways, although their supporters are gradually leaving the neighbourhood, and with both we may compare the work of the Baptists, who in this neighbourhood are very powerful. Both morning and evening on Sunday their great tabernacle in the Hackney Road is well filled. The congregation, of lower-middle and upper working class, is drawn mainly from the regions to the north of the small district with which we are now dealing. The tabernacle is seated for two thousand, and at a pinch room has been made for nearly three thousand. Amongst those who thus come under his influence their pastor has formed a band of workers, some three hundred strong, to carry on the work of the church. There are several mission centres, of which we have already described one, and there are huge Sunday schools, but Shoreditch Tabernacle is not itself a mission. It is a regularly established church, with all the solid adjuncts of Baptist organization. And what is remarkable is not so much the work carried on from the mission centres and at the schools, as the existence of this huge congregation of people of the working class, with those of the class just above it, who find here their religious inspiration. There is among them no appearance of poverty. All are well dressed, and of this their pastor is rightly proud. They do not come to church for what they get by so doing, but, on the contrary, are expected to give, and do by what they give support both the church and their pastor.

The successful system of the Congregationalist body, with its inner social and religious life and its outside mission work, which we have seen developed to perfection in the middle-class circles of North London, is here applied by the Baptists to the working classes, but with the difference characteristic of all Baptist churches, that congregational life, with them, is concentrated more absolutely upon religion and admits less of diversion. Prayer meetings and questionings of the spirit take the place of literary and debating societies.

There is about the doctrines and practices of the Baptists a sternness which no other leading religious body exhibits. It is displayed most completely by the smaller sects of Strict or Particular Baptists, but is characteristic of all. Their buildings are entirely without religious sentiment or architectural charm of any kind. It is enough if the hall is so shaped and the seats are so arranged that everyone can see and hear the preacher. They make use of no orchestra, such as the Wesleyans delight in; in many of their chapels they have not even an organ to aid the voices of the congregation with the simple hymns they sing. Nor do they mix politics with religion. It is only by religious questions that they are roused, but then they are roused indeed.

The efforts of the Baptists here, and elsewhere too, are imbued with a strong Protestant evangelical spirit, and it is their members who furnish some of the leading spirits of the Shoreditch Branch of the Protestant Alliance.

The Alliance is greatly concerned at the spread amongst the churches of the Anglican Communion of rites and doctrines hitherto exclusively identified with the Church of Rome, and of such erring churches there are several notable examples in the neighbouring districts of Haggerston and Shoreditch. It is the insidious attractions which these methods and beliefs may

have for the mass of the people that is chiefly feared—a fear, however, that would appear to be quite unnecessary. Extreme doctrines and advanced practices no doubt find some adherents; some whose religious sense seeks and can find satisfaction in this way; but the attitude of the masses on the whole question of religion seems to show that the fears of the Alliance are groundless, at any rate so far as the adult population is concerned. The children are, as always, truly catholic and impartial in matters of doctrine and observance, and the after effects of the great teaching zeal shown by the Ritualists cannot be indicated with certainty. But so far as has been seen the children no sooner leave school than they break loose from clerical guidance and in every direction seek their liberty. As they grow up they fall into the common attitude of the people; and from religion generally, and this form of religion in particular, the people hold aloof. With them the authority of the Church has no weight, nor does the comfort of the confessional attract. Certain souls are touched and won by these methods, as others, and indeed very many more, are by the simple evangelical preaching of salvation by the Blood of Christ, but the great bulk of the population (including the younger people and even the women) is indifferent, seeming not only to lack, but to be incapable of attaining to that pressing sense of sin which is the common basis not only of these but of most other forms of Christian teaching.

In the parishes lying to the north of Bethnal Green Road (from the proper concerns of which I have turned aside to consider the fears of the Shoreditch Protestant Alliance) the people are generally spoken of as hard working and respectable and not so very poor. They are indeed almost all such as *may* need help; but apart from 'old age, illness, incompetence, or drink' do

fairly well. For the last two winters there has been no need of penny dinners for the children in even the poorest schools. At the same time large sums are continually spent in charity. It is said to be extremely difficult to check fraudulent applications, and a too easy standard of eligibility for relief is almost inevitably accepted. Money for charitable purposes flows in. It can always be obtained for this more easily than for other purposes, and so it comes about that the distribution of relief is at once the natural accompaniment of all religious effort in this district and its bane.

From the parishes of St. Andrew and St. Bartholomew, which adjoin Stepney, the accounts are more cheerful. The relations of the Church with the people show reciprocal improvement. They regard each other with indulgence and kindly appreciation. The reception of the clergy is no longer cold, they are everywhere accepted as friends, and the working man's unwillingness to commit himself by the profession of religion is looked upon by his indulgent clerical critics as almost a virtue. There is here an unmistakable tendency to cater for a superior class, by drawing a tighter rein as to the giving of relief, by curtailing prizes and treats, and by abstaining from subsidizing the women who attend the mothers' meetings. The result is increased respect, and, also, increased respectability; a better class of women attend. The congregations are still very small.

It is to be noted that in one case, in recognition of the fact that the wives of working men are also their cooks and that the Sunday dinner is the most important meal of the week, the morning service has been fixed at an earlier hour than usual.

These churches claim that as regards the influence of religion things are moving in the right direction, however slowly, and cautiously add that perhaps in two generations there may be something to show. The



system adopted is always the same : to select out of schools and clubs the members of the guilds from whom more is expected and for whom more is done ; and who may become a church nucleus, a missionary band, a centre of life round which all the rest is grouped. It is pointed out that by this means permanence is given to the work ; it is made more independent of the coming and going of individual clergy, and it becomes more possible to look forward to slow progress over long periods of time. Great stress is also laid upon the vigorous and hardy character of the religion that stands firm and undeterred although fashion be against church going. It is again pointed out that among people of the class sought a church-goer is almost invariably a communicant. Beyond this the Church is supported by the consciousness that through its parochial system it fills a definite place in a definite area which the Nonconformists do not and cannot occupy. Its services are generally demanded at baptism, marriage, after child-birth and after death. Its clergy are regarded as the paid servants of the people.

In the parish of St. Andrew, the Christian Community has its headquarters, but although possessing a large block of buildings, little work is carried on there. Poorly attended gospel meetings on Sunday ; a small Sunday school ; a Band of Hope and temperance society in the winter months, comprise most of the headquarters' fixtures. The Community, however, organizes an extensive scheme of mission services in various parts of London, sometimes held in its own halls, but more often elsewhere — in lodging-houses, workhouses, infirmaries and at open-air stations. The Community, which has about two hundred members, is an undenominational society of some historic interest, 'established by the Huguenots in 1685 and re-established under the patronage of the Rev. J. Wesley in 1772.' In addition to the meetings held at the Memorial

Hall, in London Street, one or two small charitable efforts are carried on there by this body, but the part of their work that is most widely known, although not generally associated with the Community, is the Bethnal Green Free Library, which occupies adjoining premises. This library has no doubt served a useful purpose in the neighbourhood, but exception must be taken to the exaggerated claims made in its annual reports, and to the nature of the appeals issued on its behalf.

### § 3

#### OXFORD HOUSE

Neither Toynbee Hall nor Oxford House professes to act as a corporation, but among the residents at each common ideas and aspirations converge, and something not unlike corporate action frequently results. From the first, Oxford House has maintained a strong though liberal High Church attitude, and in addition to the clubs for which it is mostly famous, and to parish work and branches of work common to other settlements, such as charity organization committees, country holiday funds, and sanitary aid, there has been something distinctive in the mission preaching of the successive heads of the settlement, Mr. Adderley, Canon Henson, and the present Bishop of London. But the results of this religious propaganda were uncertain and insecure, and hence perhaps the attempt to place them on a firmer and more permanent basis by the experiment, recently abandoned, of connecting the settlement on its religious side with the organization of St. Matthew's parish. Otherwise its special work as a settlement has been directed to the promotion and management of clubs.

As Toynbee Hall finds a base of action in the men and women who attend the classes, lectures, and conferences which it provides, and of whom many also share in the other activities of the settlement, so at Oxford House an opportunity is looked for in the clubs of which it is the centre. There are three great clubs connected with the settlement—namely (1) the club which meets at Oxford House itself and goes by that name; (2) the University Club, a more distinctly social institution, which owes its development to Mr. Buchanan, and has large premises of its own: both of these being for men and both on a large scale; and (3) the 'Webbe Institute' for lads. There is also a smaller club, called the 'Repton,' for boys.

In the effort to maintain a high character, these clubs tend to rise, and, with the exception of the Repton, have risen somewhat above the class for which they were originally intended, which it must be said is a very common characteristic with efforts after social improvement. It may be that the rising standard has affected and carried with it some of the members; but a strong club influence can hardly be said to exist when the *personnel* changes rapidly and fluctuates continually. This is the case particularly with the University Club, the members of which now come from all parts of East and North London, and even beyond, and have many of them no special connection with Bethnal Green. Moreover, whatever the class and wherever they may come from, it seems to be admitted that such clubs are too large for personal acquaintance between members and managers, or even among the members themselves. Great size and a rapidly-changing membership destroy the character of brotherhood, except so far as this may be developed among some small and constant nucleus of the members.

The educational value however, of a well-managed

and wholesome club, even if a man be an active member for only a few months, is not to be despised. Moreover, though Oxford House may have failed to some extent in its attempts to create a great fellowship of men drawn from its own neighbourhood, it has still accomplished the difficult feat of club management without beer and without betting, or any of the other evils which are ruining so many of the great social and political working men's clubs, and causing them to be regarded as curses to the community.

The secret of this success consists in making each club the centre of numerous minor activities, such as athletic, football, cricket, cycling and rowing clubs; debating and other literary or dramatic societies; dancing classes, and the organization of excursions and inter-club visits. The same secret, the same system, lies at the root of some of the greatest religious successes we have had to record, sustains such institutions as the Young Men's Christian Association, and gives their most characteristic features to some of the Polytechnics. To manage such matters successfully makes extraordinary demands upon time and temper, but results in, and is repaid by, the pleasure and fulness of interest added to a thousand lives. There is, however, little that is local about such organizations; men's clubs, if on a large scale, might be almost equally well situated at any central point; and these of Oxford House play hardly any part in the amelioration of the evil conditions of life surrounding them in Bethnal Green, towards which object they were, in their inception, specially aimed.

## § 4

## RELIGIOUS WORK IN HAGGERSTON AND PART OF SHOREDITCH

The uneasiness and alarm of the Protestant Evangelical Alliance in this neighbourhood, to which we have referred, is, as we have already said, partly to be accounted for by the presence of a number of churches in which the ritual is excessively high. There are some churches in Bethnal Green where the services are what is termed 'moderately high,' but in St. Stephen's, St. Augustine's, St. Mary's, St. Chad's, and St. Columba's, which are adjoining parishes in Haggerston, with St. Michael's, Shoreditch, we have a crescendo of Ritualistic and Romish practices. Taken together they provide an excellent test of the results and value of the work of the High Church, better in many ways than can be obtained from any single isolated parish.

In the parish of St. Augustine's is situated the 'Priory,' headquarters in London of the Sisters of St. Margaret, of East Grinstead. Of these Sisters twenty-eight live here and work in four of the adjacent parishes. Thirteen are allocated to St. Augustine's, and these are, to a great extent, responsible for the parish organization. The Priory itself is the centre of a number of charitable operations. There is a dispensary at which doctors' prescriptions are made up for the bare cost of the drugs, and simple remedies are given away. There are halfpenny dinners for the school children and, in winter, free dinners for men out of work, and occasional free teas on Sundays. Dinners are also sent out to the sick, and thousands of tickets for bread or groceries or coals are given away. Work is found for women.\* Immense quantities of old

\* It may be noticed, and it is very striking, that in all these things the Wesleyans in their missions follow exactly the same lines as the Anglican Sisters.

clothes are collected and sold at nominal prices, together with new garments specially made and sent for this purpose; contributions being acknowledged from no fewer than two hundred 'local centres' or other sources.

There is a girls' club which, like the clubs at Oxford House, has been almost too successful, as the rough girls for whose sake it was started find themselves out of place in it. For destitute girls a home is made when needed. There is, too, a *crèche* where forty children are taken care of daily for a small payment. The Sisters also manage the girls' and infants' Sunday school in St. Augustine's parish, as well as the Band of Hope and mothers' meeting, and have established a special organization, a branch of the Women's Help Society, called the Mission of the Good Shepherd, which is a society of communicants, or those preparing for confirmation.

The work of the Sisters is thus on an extensive scale, but of the whole only the Sunday school and the society of communicants are directly religious. Of course, much is hoped, but very little result is claimed. In fact, from the strictly religious point of view, failure is frankly admitted. They work on 'in the hope that it will tell in the end.' There is certainly here no immediate cause for alarm on the part of the Protestant Alliance.

The sacred and ornate services of the church, aided by the efforts of the Sisters, attract to St. Augustine's congregations of one to two hundred, mostly women and girls, or young persons of the lower middle and working classes of the district, together with a considerable number of children. There are, it is said, over three hundred communicants at Easter, and four hundred names on the roll. The influence of the church may be deep, but is certainly restricted. It is only in the Sunday school that we find extension,

there being 950 children on the books with an average attendance of 780.

In the other parishes in which they operate, the Sisters of St. Margaret do similar work, but play a less important part. St. Mary's, with its beautiful musical service and the powerful traditions of its pulpit, draws a congregation from outside the parish, and within devotes its efforts to the children with whom Haggerston swarms, gathering them together in the Sunday schools, feeding those of them that need it, and prolonging the influence of the Church so far as possible in the usual ways. The place of Summer excursions and Winter treats in holding the work together is very frankly recognised. 'Any branch of our organization—Sunday schools, Bands of Hope, lads' club, guilds, girls' friendly society, and even the staid members of our mothers' meetings—that did not have its own particular Christmas party or treat, would consider itself highly aggrieved, not to say defrauded of its just rights.' And, continues the report: 'After all it is very delightful to be able to make such a large number of children (of all ages, even grown-up ones) enjoy a thoroughly festive and jolly evening.' In this parish charitable relief takes its accustomed place in relation to parochial visitation, but is very carefully administered, so that it can hardly be called bribery. It is only an attempt, whether wisely conceived or not, to help the poor in their pinched lives and mitigate the hardships of their lot; and differs in no material way from the efforts of the evangelical missions or the Nonconformist churches. It certainly seems to have no result even on church attendance, no visible connection of any kind with the spread of dangerous doctrines.

The men's club has felt the competition of purely secular ones, which cater better for amusement, and has now taken a more religious cast, most of its

small circle of members being communicants. On the other hand, a mutual loan and investment society, which is entirely secular, is numerically very successful, having over five hundred members.

At St. Stephen's, a much poorer and rather remote parish, the High Ritualistic services are entirely neglected by the public. Parishioners are not interested, and the outsiders who used to attend now find all they want equally well elsewhere. Missions and out-door services have been abandoned as of no avail, and the multiplication of services in church is denounced. There used to be daily morning and evening service, but no one came; and this, the vicar points out, is the case in all poor districts, the clergy uselessly wearing themselves out in this way when time and energy are wanted for other things. Here, too, they have schools, clubs, and mothers' meetings, and, if they had it to give, 'could spend more on relief,' but the religious attitude is reported to be one of 'complete indifference and apathy,' depending, it is suggested, on race and temperament, and the effects of city surroundings, rather than on any doctrinal teaching.

The work at St. Chad's I believe to have been similar in character to that of St. Mary's and St. Augustine's. I am, however, without particulars, the vicar having died just at the time of our inquiry. But at St. Columba's, where we cross the Kingsland Road, it is different. Here the social agencies are unimportant; there is neither time nor accommodation for them; the work is definitely and exclusively religious. The parish is practically in Hoxton; the population stamped with the low and criminal character of that district; and amid this sea of ignorance and iniquity the church makes its attempt. It is not alone that its ritual is extreme—the most extreme in this neighbourhood (unless it be St. Michael's) and one of the most extreme in London—but so also are its teaching and



its practices. There is no flinching ; no compromise is admitted. Something, no doubt, is accomplished. The church is regarded as a mission, and all its activities are aimed at the winning of souls to God. Frequent open-air services are held. What marchings with a brass-band are to the Wesleyans, processions round the parish are here. There are Sisters of the Church Extension, Kilburn, who visit the people and relieve their distresses, with the ultimate object of bringing them within the ministrations of the Church, and so under the influence of its priests. Every device is adopted to strengthen the spiritual hold over those who are reached. Confession is practically insisted upon, and is made the very corner-stone of the structure. The regular performance of religious duties is systematically watched—the Baptists, too, do this—work of one kind or another is found to bind the members to the church ; and it is remarkable in this poor parish, where many of the congregation come from a distance, how large a proportion of the workers are found locally. The roughest lads take their places as ‘ altar servers.’

The work is not new. The church was built some thirty years ago, and for the whole of this period the methods adopted have been much the same. Whether they be good or bad, they fail to touch the people. The congregations are not large, are partly drawn from outside, and consist mainly of women. The result would seem to be more particularly a work of personal influence exercised upon a limited number of impressionable souls, ‘ teachable,’ but morally flabby, culled from a degraded population. What is done, cannot, I think, be accounted bad. The system adopted might be weakening and demoralizing if it could be applied to individuals of hardier moral fibre, but amongst such as these whom it serves, it may have power to interest, to sustain, and even to

awaken a divine response in their poor souls not less remarkable nor less spiritually true than any of the other wondrous ways of religious salvation.

In the parishes of St. Augustine, St. Mary, and St. Chad, there are no regular Nonconformist churches, but the Congregationalists have a branch mission which has grown out of a ragged school. There is another mission of a strongly evangelical type, and a third which belongs to the United Methodist Free Church. This last is built like a lighthouse; it displays a revolving light and employs a powerful brass-band to draw men to its services, which are conducted by sensational converts and other working-class evangelists, and draw considerable numbers.

The Congregationalists speak of poverty and indifference as the characteristics of the people. They compete with the High Church sisterhood in providing Christmas dinners and the 'usual treats,' and open a soup kitchen in winter to coax some of the mothers to their services. But their greatest work is among the children, and culminates in a Band of Hope, said to be the largest in all London. All the workers in this mission are strong teetotalers, and in that direction great efforts are made. It is admitted, very simply, that the Adult Total Abstinence Society can fill its room unless it is a 'religious sort of meeting.' It may be assumed that the people absent themselves in that case, not because they object to the religion, so much as that they demand the entertainment, which is always provided when the object is not 'religious.' If the entertainment were compatible with the Gospel, and incompatible with special temperance propaganda, the religious meetings would be packed and those in favour of temperance neglected.

The record of the Evangelical Mission is simply that of a struggle with the High Church for the souls and bodies of the children, and yet there would seem

to be plenty of work for both. It is *dole versus dole*, and *treat versus treat*, a contest openly admitted on both sides; while the people, taking the gifts with either hand, explain how careful they must be, when attending a service, that the other side knows nothing of it. This atrocious system, based on the delusive claim of each party to a monopoly of religious truth, is injurious to both, as well as to the recipients of their demoralizing bounties. Apart from this, some good honest work is done; as, for instance, in this mission by the 'Band of Love and Service,' a meeting once a week of eighty to one hundred rough boys who subject themselves to six teachers, and have occasionally to be turned out for disorderly conduct, 'but always want to come back.' Or by the Sunday Bible-class for thirty lads of even lower type; such lads as in the street always disperse if they see a policeman: who 'aint doin' nothin'' at the moment, but to whom the police are a danger to be shunned; and who, it is said, give the missionary credit for the power, in case of extreme need, of having them 'lagged and put away'; a rather singular, but it seems effective, basis of class discipline.

Mr. Cuff's great tabernacle, which we have already described, represents Nonconformity over the whole of this district. The congregation is, in fact, drawn more from Haggerston and Shoreditch than from Bethnal Green.

Apart from the string of High Churches, the Establishment is here represented by the parish church (St. Leonard's), which, as usual with old parish churches, avoids extremes, and succeeds, without making any very stressful efforts, in attracting to its services the respectable congregations which such churches always do secure. The remaining parishes of Shoreditch, of which St. Michael's is one, are included in the next chapter.

## § 5

## STANDARD OF LIFE IN BETHNAL GREEN

Bethnal Green shares hardly at all the homeless population so characteristic of Whitechapel, and has comparatively few of the criminals who make Hoxton notorious ; but much of its family life and social habits are at as low a level as any in London. What this level is may be best shown by a patchwork of quotations from the evidence before us. This population is spoken of by the police as consisting largely of 'hard working people, who work honestly for their living and get drunk on Saturday night, but who give no trouble' (to the police that is). It is noted that the two years preceding our inquiry (1896 and 1897) were very prosperous and that there had been few complaints of lack of work, but it is added that 'when in work all'—that is all surplus—'is spent in drink,' so that 'with one bad year the people would be in want.' This applies to many who are earning good wages. Heavy drinking is said to be a sure sign that work is plentiful. 'The police are busiest when the people are most prosperous'—or would be so if it were not for the drink. The worst times are Bank Holidays, for which occasions money is saved up. One of the clergy says that 'there is practically no thrift except putting by for a burst.' Another, that 'drink is about as bad as can be.' And a third says of his parish that 'there is none poorer in London, but the poverty is almost entirely the result of drink.' A parish nurse speaks of the 'Monday morning business of the pawn-shops as a sight to see.' No shame is felt among the women either about putting clothes away, or as to entering public-houses. This we hear on all sides. 'In drinking the women are as bad as the men.' Suicides, following upon drinking bouts and quarrels between

man and wife, are said to be common, and so, too, are sudden deaths among infants and children due to neglect or improper feeding. The nurse, speaking of part of one of these parishes, says 'it would be difficult to find rougher streets anywhere in London,' but she adds that the people all respect the nurse's uniform.

In all ways we have a picture of extraordinarily rough and low life. Weddings, we are told, are the occasion of a drunken orgy, the disorder extending even to the church, and reaching such a pass that the clergy frequently have to refuse to go on with the service till it ceases. Marriages are contracted at an early age, and in many cases for pressing reasons. The ceremony is often postponed to the very last moment at which it is possible to save the situation, but 'is always intended'; the girls count on it, for the local ethical standard is strong on the necessity of marriage under such circumstances. On the other hand, if difficulties between the couple arise later on, to leave wife and home and live with another woman is not regarded as a serious offence, if the circumstances are felt to justify this course. In all these matters there are, however, strict rules of propriety, accepted by public opinion, which cannot be violated with impunity by those who wish to live on pleasant terms with their neighbours, though they may not follow the ordinary lines either of legal or religious morality.

Taking the district as a whole the roughness seems to be decreasing slowly. Conditions are becoming more level. 'Bad places are not quite so bad nor good places quite so good,' but 'it is harder for a bad place to become better than for a good place to become worse,' and so it happens that the shifting of a low class population by clearances, although it affords valuable opportunities, does in some way increase the difficulties to be dealt with.

There is much life and good humour in the streets ;

the Sunday morning bird fair in Sclater Street has all the crowded geniality of a race meeting. Those who live near, in the triangle between Sclater Street and Bethnal Green Road, are a very sporting set who live as a happy family, and 'whip round' to make up a purse for bail or for defence of anyone 'in trouble.' Here we touch the criminal side of Bethnal Green, and to this spot have come many of the more doubtful characters from the 'Nichol,' but crime does not here assume its blackest aspect. Perhaps the worst form it takes is that of prostitution carried on with intent to rob, a drunken man becoming the easy prey of a woman and her bully.

The bird fair (like the Jew market of old Petticoat Lane) is attended from far and wide, but specially reflects the pleasures and habits of the neighbouring people of Bethnal Green, which turn largely on domestic pets; singing birds, rabbits and guinea pigs, fowls, pigeons, dogs, and even goats, are dealt in; any kind of animal that can be kept in or on a house or in a back yard. Flowering plants for window gardening are also greatly affected. One of the churches has had an annual flower show for thirty years; and the flower market in Columbia Road is one of the largest in London. Moreover, an old-established population such as this, is not without quiet corners. In George Gardens, out of Old Bethnal Green Road, are residents who have lived there forty or fifty years; respectable poor folk who are proud of their gardens (which indeed are a picture in summer) and avowing that 'it would be impossible to find a nicer house or a better copper or a pleasanter place to live in.'

Health in Bethnal Green is reported as surprisingly good, considering the crowding, and the 'loathsome' character of many of the houses, and considering also that the faults of construction are aggravated by bad usage. The character of block dwellings, we are again told, depends mainly on the management and on the

personality of the caretaker. 'If these are bad, the place becomes a hell;' and once more one of the buildings erected by a partly philanthropic company is described as 'one of the roughest to be found anywhere,' in bad condition, and with broken windows. Broken windows are one of the surest signs of rough life, and it is curious to note that those of the Jews are intact, which would seem to show that where there is damage it comes from within, and not from without.

As to employment, silk-weaving still lingers, but boot-making, and cabinet-making in its various branches, especially the making of chairs, are now the leading trades of Bethnal Green, though in the district itself there is no local wholesale market for these goods. In almost every branch of cabinet-making the small workshops still account for a large number of those employed; but boot-making is increasingly done on a larger scale. The extensive introduction of machinery into boot manufacture, and trade-union policy, alike tend to push the work into factory or workshop, so that less and less of this work is done in the homes, a change which affects social life in various ways. Some of the clergy regard it as making even more hopeless the normally difficult task of 'getting at the men,' but there is not very much in the argument. In addition to these trades, which give a stamp of peculiarity to the streets of Bethnal Green, there are large numbers of costermongers living and pursuing their loud vocation here, and there are also many small shopkeepers and others who live on supplying the wants of the poor; while, at the bottom, the population passes through the doubtful paths of the 'fancy' into those of the professional thief. Amongst the women there are matchbox makers and toy-makers, both being home industries, while a certain number also find employment in the lighter branches of the two staple trades of the district.

## § 6

PUBLIC BUILDINGS AND LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN  
BETHNAL GREEN

The attempt to supply Bethnal Green with religion by building churches had a parallel in the elaborate and architecturally successful vegetable market, that the Baroness Burdett-Coutts was induced to build for the benefit of the people, but which is practically unused. A coal market adjoining has had no better success, and has now been turned into a swimming-bath; and a street carefully roofed in to serve as a potato market has also failed to secure any trade. The people cling to their old ways, and the costermongers prefer to ply freely in the open streets. Projects of this description are dreams seldom capable of realization. They must necessarily conflict with many existing interests, as well as habits and prejudices, and, at the same time, neither producers, brokers, dealers, nor the buying public are effectively aided.

An attempt was made to utilize part of the buildings for a Polytechnic Institute, but this also failed, and has been closed. It was called the 'Church Polytechnic,' but was church only in name; for parsons were rigidly excluded, on the theory that where they are the working man will not come; but even with this liberal concession to his prejudices, the working man did not come, and the institution dwindled away.

The Bethnal Green Museum, which is on the east side of Cambridge Road (and therefore actually outside of the district we are now describing), was also mainly due to the munificence of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts, and has better repaid her generosity. It was opened in 1872, and is worked as a branch of the Victoria and Albert Museum at South Kensington. On three days of the week it is open to the public till 10 p.m.,



and till dusk on other days, including Sunday ; and although not used so much as in the first year or two, when it had the charm of a new thing, is still visited by large numbers. Admission is always free and there is no age limit, children, if they behave themselves, being as readily admitted as adults, while in recent years the number of parties of school children brought by their teachers has greatly increased. Most of the day visitors are children : it is after six, when the evening is supposed to begin, that the number of adults is greatest.

The building is well situated, and though it lacks the architectural beauty that has been so lavishly squandered on the market, is well adapted for its purpose, and is full of interesting and instructive exhibits, some permanent, and others of varied character coming on loan. A visitor turning in from the dull streets of the neighbourhood on some dreary November evening is best able to appreciate the advantages of such an institution, warm, well-lighted, orderly, and full of interest, in the heart of working-class London.

In sanitary matters there has been of late years a great awakening in Bethnal Green. A good staff has been appointed, and the work placed on a satisfactory footing. But the difficulties to be contended with are great. The pressure of poverty is heavy, and in effect, if not in reality, it is increasing. Housing is declared to be 'loathsome,' 'utterly bad,' 'as bad as it well can be,' 'bad for sanitation and morality'; and there is 'shocking overcrowding.' The mischief is primarily due to the habits of the occupants, but it is complained that the Housing Act is too weak as regards public needs, and 'leaves too much room for the botching up of bad property.' This degree of licence is followed up by a good deal of house-farming. Speculators take a number of houses,

perhaps a whole street, and make what they can by sub-letting—often leasehold property with the leases shortly running out. The leaseholder sub-lets his conscience with the building; the ultimate owner is not yet on the field. Meanwhile it is the house-farmer's interest to spend as little as possible on repairs, so the property falls into worse and worse condition, the occupants are confirmed in their reckless habits, and the public interest suffers.

Some small clearances have been effected, but in attempting anything of this kind, the authorities hardly know which way to turn. Not long ago two small streets were scheduled for a much-needed improvement, but the expense and the difficulties of rehousing according to law were found too great, and the scheme was abandoned. To acquire the property, and rebuild satisfactorily, and yet let the rooms at rents which the people could pay, was deemed a hopeless task.

The crowding has been aggravated no doubt by the Boundary Street clearances, and against the pressure thus caused the sanitary officials can make little headway. Abated in one place, the congestion becomes intensified in another. Rents being so high and they so poor, the people must crush in somewhere, and if at last they seek the workhouse that also is found to be overcrowded.

Nevertheless, bad as things are in parts, we are told that there is improvement on the whole; that sanitary conditions generally can be called good, and health, as has been said, 'surprisingly good under the circumstances.' These opinions are borne out by the official statistics of a falling death-rate, but at the same time the positive evils suffered are witnessed to by the continuous heavy mortality among the children.

The undeniably messy condition of the streets is mainly due to the habits and occupations of the people,

of whom so many are costers. They throw the refuse of their stock-in-trade into the street, and there is great difficulty in stopping this convenient practice. On Sunday morning the disorder is at its worst. The daily sweeping of every street would, it is held, be a greater expense than can be afforded, but some improvements in this direction and in better kinds of pavement, which conduce to cleanliness, are being gradually made.

At Bethnal Green both indoor and outdoor pauperism have grown apace, the numbers relieved and the amount expended being more than double in 1895 what they were in 1878. Whether the connection between this development and the increase of poverty be cause or effect, I cannot tell; but that the district is poorer than it was ten or twenty years ago is almost certain.

The opening of the great new infirmary in Cambridge Road was, at the time of our inquiry, looked forward to as providing scope for improvement, by relieving the pressure on the workhouse and making possible the differentiation of cases.

Since 1895, without any absolute change of principle, the Guardians have been more careful in administration; the amount of out-relief given has been materially reduced, and the numbers to whom it is given still more so. There is doubtless room for further improvement. The plan adopted has been to frame rules for the guidance of the Relief Committee, and exceptions to these rules are only allowed by the authority of the whole Board.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. MAP H. (VOL. II., CHAPTERS I. and II.)  
Inner East.

Adjoining Maps—N. Hackney (Vol. I.); E. Outer East (Vol. I.); S. Inner South London (Vol. IV.).

**General Character.**—The map covers the districts of Haggerston, Bethnal Green, Spitalfields, Mile End New Town, part of Mile End Old Town, Whitechapel, Goodman's Fields, St. George's-in-the-East, Shadwell, and Wapping. This is the 'heart' of the East End. Practically all the inhabitants belong to the employed classes. Bethnal Green is noted for its rough English poverty, Spitalfields and Whitechapel for Jews and common lodging-houses and shelters, Wapping and Shadwell for their connection with docks, riverside labour and sailors. The character of the locality is affected by its nearness to the City and to the river, by the oldness of its houses, and by the presence of a large and extending colony of Jews. The extension of business premises on the borders of the City is interspersed with that of great blocks of dwellings in Whitechapel, beyond the Tower, near the Mint, and in the Boundary Street area in Bethnal Green. The canal on the North, the City on the West, and the river on the South, hem the population in on three sides, and the whole area tends to become more uniformly poor. The general colouring of the map is purple, varied with large patches of light and dark blue. Some pink remains at the edges, but in decreasing quantity. Servants are found only in the main streets, and very few in them. Owing to the presence of the Jews, parts of Whitechapel and St. George's give the impression of a foreign town; women with olive complexions, and dark-bearded men in Russian-Polish dress; streets littered with fish-heads and orange peel.

**Poverty Areas.**—Throughout Bethnal Green there is a large amount of old-established poverty living in two-storeyed 'light blue' streets, the men being carmen, labourers of all sorts, furniture makers and bootmakers in a small way; coupled with this there is the large area of dark blue and black in St. Paul's and St. Matthew's parishes representing the very rough vicious class of which the 'Nichol,' now demolished for the new London County Council buildings, used to be the type (*vide* p. 67); some of this has extended still further East to St. Jude's and St. Andrew's parishes. In the North, near Regent's Canal, is the light and dark blue of old-standing 'labouring' and 'gas-works' poverty. The black spots in Whitechapel denote vice and crime as depraved as anything in London; further East, in St. Bartholomew's parish, is poverty that is degraded rather than criminal, the badness of the houses being due primarily to the insanitary and dirty habits of the occupants. South of Whitechapel Road, and more especially between Commercial Road and the river, are patches of dark blue, some of which indicate alien immigrant poverty, but are more often related to remnants of rough English and Irish who have not yet been ousted by the Jews; many are dockers; the 'black' spots are generally connected with sailors' brothels. Speaking generally, 'sturdy' poverty is found in Bethnal Green and Haggerston, north of the Great Eastern Railway, and again in the South, in Wapping; 'wastrel' poverty obtains more particularly in Spitalfields and Whitechapel.

**Employments.**—The principal industries are: in Haggerston and Bethnal Green, cabinet making, boot and shoe work, silk-weaving, glass-blowing, gas-work and costering, whilst women do cardboard and match-box making; in Whitechapel, boot and shoe work, tailoring, mantle making, cap making, fur dressing and sewing, brewing, and cigar and tobacco manufacturing; in St. George's-in-the-East, dock work and general waterside labour, gas work, and for women sack making. The

whirr of the sewing machine, and the 'tap-tap' of the shoemaker's hammer, are characteristic of the Jewish streets. Throughout the districts there are large numbers of carmen, draymen, and warehousemen.

**Housing and Rents.**—With a few exceptions the houses in the whole of the area covered by the map were built for, and inhabited from the first by the working classes. The exceptions occur chiefly in Whitechapel and St. George's-in-the-East, where were once the homes of small city men, retired shop-keepers, and ships' captains; these houses can still be distinguished by their carved door lintels and panelled passages. The majority of the houses are two-storeyed, some are three; the model buildings run to six storeys, and some even have workshops above. Rents are rising, and crowding increasing, owing to the natural advantages of a central position and limitation of space, intensified by the continued immigration of foreign Jews. The whole district has been long inhabited, the houses are old, though for the most part fairly built; new building takes the form of 'model' dwellings on the sites of former slum areas, or tenement houses in place of two-storeyed cottages.

In Bethnal Green the typical house has two storeys, 15 ft. or 16 ft. frontage, four to six rooms, and a rental of from 10s to 13s. It is usually taken by a better-class artisan, who keeps two rooms, and sub-lets the rest. The rent of single rooms runs from 2s 6d to 3s; two rooms, 4s 6d to 5s 6d.

Whitechapel has a very large population living in 'models' and common lodging-houses, and a considerable number of registered furnished rooms let out at 5s per week per room. Rents in 'models' are 2s 6d to 4s per room, and 5s to 6s for two rooms. Common lodging-houses charge 4d and 6d per night.

St. George's: two or three-storeyed houses, often with basements, six to eight rooms, frontage 15 to 16 feet. Many families in single rooms. Houses of four to six rooms, 7s 6d to 12s; single room, 2s 6d to 3s; two rooms, 4s to 5s 6d.

For Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, and St. George's, the rents given above were for 1898, since when the rise has been considerable; a premium known as key-money is also often obtained. The rents in the London County Council buildings are—in the Boundary Street area, 3s 6d for one-roomed tenements, 5s 6d to 7s 6d for two rooms, 5s 9d to 9s 6d for three rooms, 9s 6d to 12s 6d for four rooms, and 13s to 14s 6d for five and six rooms. In the Cable Street area (St. George's-in-the-East) two and three rooms are rented at 5s to 7s (1901).

**Markets.**—The best known street-markets are Goldsmith's Row in Haggerston, Brick Lane and the southern end of the Cambridge Road in Bethnal Green, Wentworth Street and High Street in Whitechapel, and Watney Street in St. George's. Barrows appear in many of the main streets on Fridays and Saturdays; and Sclater Street, in Shore-ditch, is the famous bird fair. The crowd on Sunday mornings, extending from Middlesex Street, through Wentworth Street, and up Brick Lane into Sclater Street, is one of the most remarkable sights that London can offer. Wentworth Street, except on Sundays, is almost exclusively a Jewish market, Brick Lane is English, Whitechapel High Street and Watney Street are mixed. Some prices in Watney Street: bread 4½d the 4 lb. loaf; meat, scraps, 2d lb., fair bits, 4d to 6d lb.; good pork chops, 6d each; sausages, 4d to 6d lb.; fair bacon from 3d to 6d lb.; margarine, 4d to 6d lb.; butter, 10d to 1s 2d lb.; cheese, 5d lb.; fair potatoes, 2d for 3 lb. (February 1898.)

**Public-houses.**—There is no want of either public-houses or beer-houses. The number of fully licensed houses is a marked feature of the

Kingsland Road, Whitechapel Road, and St. George's Street (late Ratcliff Highway), which are all main highways of old standing. Haggerston and Bethnal Green are noted for the number of beerhouses, pointing to the fact that they have always been inhabited by the working classes. The riotous days of Ratcliff Highway, when it was the main road from the docks for sailors just paid off after a long sea voyage in a sailing ship, are over. Steamers, and the habit of sending sailors' wages home direct from shipboard, have largely affected the profits of its licensed houses.

**Places of Amusement.**—The best known are the London Music Hall in Shoreditch High Street (the Standard Theatre is on the opposite side of the road, and so out of our district), the Cambridge Music Hall in Commercial Street, the Foresters' and Sebright Music Halls in Bethnal Green, and the 'Pavilion' Theatre in the Whitechapel Road. King's Hall, Commercial Road, and a few minor halls are largely used by Jews. In addition, there are Oxford House with its clubs, and St. Andrew's Institute in Bethnal Green, the Tee-to-tum clubs in Bethnal Green and Whitechapel, and Toynbee Hall in Commercial Street. St. George's Town Hall is used for entertainments of various kinds, otherwise St. George's-in-the-East has to depend for its local amusements on religious bodies and friendly leads in public-houses.

**Open Spaces.**—There is a great want of open spaces. There is a small raised mound, surrounded by blocks of models, with a bandstand, and planted with shrubs, which does duty as a recreation ground at Boundary Street. Besides this there are a few churchyards open to the public, among them being St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, and Christ Church, Spitalfields, and St. George's-in-the-East. In Wapping the London County Council has opened a fine recreation ground behind Tench Street, and there are the air spaces of the docks and the river. More might be done in securing such squares as Wellclose and Trinity Squares for the public, following the tardy lead given in the case of Albert Square, off the Commercial Road, which was only saved at the last moment from the hands of the speculative builder. Just outside the district are Bethnal Green Gardens and Victoria Park, which are used by the dwellers on the eastern side. The main open spaces of the district are in reality the Whitechapel Road and the Commercial Road.

**Health.**—Considering the surrounding conditions, health is surprisingly good in Bethnal Green and St. George's-in-the-East, where the fact that the houses are for the most part two-storeyed and the streets fairly wide to some extent counterbalances the want of open spaces. In Whitechapel, where the smaller houses have been replaced by huge 'models,' there is complaint of gradual deterioration in health: it is difficult for children to be taken often up and down the steps of six-storeyed 'buildings'—the living room is less healthy as a play-ground than the street; some trace the undoubted increase of consumption to this cause.

The soil is sand and gravel except in Wapping, which lies lower than the rest of the district and is on clay.

**Changes of Population.**—(1) There has been the gradual drift outwards of the fairly comfortable pink classes; (2) The demolition of slum areas, as in Boundary Street and Cable Street (St. George's-in-the-East), with the dispersal of the former inhabitants in the first instance to neighbouring streets, and, where this was not possible, to Canning Town and Plaistow. The new inhabitants of the 'buildings' are mostly drawn from the better classes in the surrounding streets; some are brought in from outside, as is said to be the case in the Boundary Street area. The increase of dark blue and black in the streets

contiguous is well shown in the case of the Boundary Street clearances; (3) The increase of the Jewish population by immigration to such an extent as to make an almost foreign town of Whitechapel, and their continued expansion North to Bethnal Green, and South and East over St. George's-in-the-East and Stepney.

The net result is that there is less of the worst and the best, and more of the 'in-between'; there is less 'pink' and 'dark blue,' and more purple.

**Means of Locomotion.**—There is fair communication North and East by the Great Eastern Railway; by the London, Tilbury and Southend and Blackwall Railways eastwards; and by the Metropolitan Railway westwards and southwards across the river at Wapping. Horse tramways run East along the Whitechapel Road to Stratford, some branching North up the Cambridge Road to Upper Clapton, and along the Commercial Road to the East India Docks; they are slow and apt to be blocked by the large amount of heavy traffic on its way to the docks. The omnibuses along the same routes, though less comfortable, are more speedy. There is also a line along Commercial Street connecting the docks with Shoreditch and Clerkenwell. Quicker tram-services are wanted with through communication either across or under the City, and another roadway across the Great Eastern Railway, which unduly obstructs the natural expansion of Whitechapel northwards.

### PLACES OF WORSHIP.

**List of Parish Churches** situated in the district described in Chapters I. and II., with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped in their ecclesiastical parishes.

#### All Saints, Mile End New Town.

King Edward Miss., Albert St.  
St. Anne (R.C.), Underwood St.

#### Christ Church, Spitalfields.

Christ Ch. Hall, Hanbury St.  
Christ Church Miss., Dorset St.  
Christian Community Hall,  
Flower and Dean St.

Brit. Jews' Mis., 15, Fournier St.  
Synagogue, Booth St.

Spitalfields' Gt. Synagogue,  
Fournier St.

Princes' Synag., 18, Princelet St.  
Synagogue, New Ct., Fashion St.

#### Christ Church, Watney St.

Ebenezer Cong. Ch., Watney St.  
Bapt. Chapel, Commercial Rd.  
German W'sl. C., Commercial Rd.

#### Holy Trinity, Shoreditch.

Nichol St. Ragged Sch. (Cong.),  
Old Nichol St.

Bapt. Ch., Bethnal Green Rd.

\*Brethren Meeting House, Sclater St.

#### St. Andrew, Bethnal Green.

St. Andrew's Miss., 255, Cambridge Rd.

Cong. Ch., Bethnal Green Rd.  
Memorial Hall (Christian Community), London St.

Gospel Hall (Brethren), 117,  
Coventry St.

#### St. Augustine, Haggerston.

Miss. of Good Shepherd, 31,  
Goldsmith Row.

Dove Row Ragg'd S., Dove Row.

#### St. Augustine, Stepney.

E. Lond. Miss. to Jews, 87, Commercial Rd.

St. Boniface (German R. C.), 47,  
Union St.

New Hambro' Syn., Union St.  
Synagogue, 45, Commercial Rd.  
Synagogue, 80, Greenfield St.

#### St. Bartholomew, Bethnal Gr.

St. Martin's Miss., Somerford St.

Manham Hall, Darling Row.

Salv. Army Slum Post, Tent St.

\* Now closed (1902).

**St. Chad, Haggerston.**

Bapt. Miss., Shap St.

**St. Columba, Kingsland Rd.**

Hoxton Hall, Hoxton High St.

**St. George's-in-the-East.**

St. Matthew's, Pell St.

St. George's Miss., St. George St.

St. George's Miss., Tait St.

Seamen's Bethel (Cong.), Old Gravel Lane.

St. George's Wesl. Ch., Cable St.

Swedish Prot. Ch., Princes Sq.

Miss. to Jews, 36, Wellclose Sq.

S. Army Slum Post, 263, Cable St.

**St. James, Ratcliff.**

Thames Ch. Mis., 53, Medland St.

Friends' Mtg. House, 53, Brook St.

Friends' Miss. Institute, Commercial Rd.

**St. James the Gt., Bethnal Gr.**

Unitn. Chapel, Mansford St.

Friends' Hall, Barnet Grove.

**St. John, St. George's East.**

St. John's Miss., Christian St.

Synagogue, Cannon Street Rd.

**St. John, Wapping.**

St. Patrick (R. C.), Green Bank.

Wesl. East End Miss., Redmead Lane.

**St. Jude, Bethnal Green.**

L. C. Miss., Bethnal Green Rd.

**St. Jude, Whitechapel.**

Bapt. Ch., Commercial St.

St. Paul's German Reformed Ch., Goulston St.

George Yard Miss., George Yd.

George Yard Miss., 87, High St.

S.A. Slum Post, 78, Wentworth St.

Synagogue, Davis's Mansions, Goulston St.

**St. Leonard, Shoreditch.**

Bapt. Miss., Kingsland Rd.

Hackney Rd. Mis., Union Cres.

L. C. Miss., Basing Place.

**St. Mark, Whitechapel.**

Ch. of the English Martyrs

(R. C.), Gt. Prescott St.

Gap Miss., Johnson's Court.

German Y.M.C.A., 90, Leman St.

Synagogue, Scarborough St.

**St. Mary, Haggerston.****St. Mary, St. George's East.**

SS. Mary and Michael (R. C.), Commercial Rd.

**St. Mary, Spitalfields.**

Artillery Lane Mis., Steward St.

German Synagogue, Spital Sq.

Synagogue, Artillery St.

Synagogue, Sandy's Row.

Synagogue, 37A, Gun St.

**St. Mary, Whitechapel.**

St. Barnabas' Mis., Thomas St.

St. Mary's Miss., Fieldgate St.

St. Mary's Mis., Thomas Pas'ge.

Brunswick Cong. Ch., Whitechapel Rd.

Zoar Bapt. Ch., Gt. Alie St.

Bapt. Ch., Little Alie St.

St. George's German Ch., Little Alie St.

Pres. Jewish Miss., 58, Whitechapel Rd.

Barbian Miss. to Jews, 82, Whitechapel Rd. (opened 1901).

Synagogue, Spectacle Alley.

Synagogue, St. Mary's St.

Synagogue, Vine Court.

Synagogue, Gt. Garden St.

Synagogue, 37, Fieldgate St.

Synagogue, 111-117, New Rd.

Synagogue, Great Alie St.

Synagogue, 5, Old Montague St.

**St. Matthew, Bethnal Green.**

St. Matthew's Miss., 203, Bethnal Green Rd.

Shaftesbury Hall (L. C. M.), Gossett St.

**St. Matthias, Bethnal Green.**

Petley Hall, Chilton St.

L. C. Miss., 160, Brick Lane.

**St. Olave, Mile End New T'wn.**

Trinity Cong. Ch., Hanbury St.

K. Edward Miss., K. Edward St.

Hebrew Conference Hall, 87, Old Montague St.

Synagogue, 39, Dunk St.

Synagogue, 179, Hanbury St.

**St. Paul, Bethnal Green.**

Shoreditch Tab. (Bapt.), Hackney Rd.

Gibraltar Miss. (Bapt.), Gibraltar Walk.

**St. Paul, Dock St.**

St. Paul's Miss., Wellclose Sq.

Seamen's Ch., 214, St. George St.

Old Mahogany Bar (Wesl.), Gracie's Alley.



**St. Paul, Shadwell.**

St. Paul's Miss., 120, High St.  
 Wesl. East E'd Mis., 225, High St.  
 L. C. Miss., Love Lane.  
 L. C. Miss., Twine Court.  
 British and Foreign Sailors'  
 Institute, Mercers' St.

**St. Peter, Bethnal Green.**

Adelphi Cong. Ch., Hackney Rd.  
 Salv. Army Slum Post, 374,  
 Hackney Rd.

**St. Peter, London Dock.**

St. Peter's Miss., Wapping Wall.  
 Cong. Ch., Old Gravel Lane.

**St. Philip, Bethnal Green.**

Home of Industry, 29, Bethnal  
 Green Rd.

S. Army Slum Post, 86, Sclater St.

**St. Philip, Stepney.**

St. Philip's Instit., Newark St.

Wycliffe Cong. Ch., Philpot St.

Brethren Ch., 70, Sidney St.

L. C. Miss., 116, Bedford St.

Mildmay Miss. to the Jews,  
 Philpot St.

**St. Stephen, Haggerston.**

Shalom Bapt. Ch., The Oval.

P. Meth. Ch., The Oval.

Harbour Light (U. Meth. F.Ch.),  
 Goldsmith's Row.

Ann's Place Miss. (Cong.),  
 Pritchard's Rd.

**St. Stephen, Spitalfields.**

Bedford Inst. (Friends'), Quaker  
 St.

Synagogue, Quaker St.

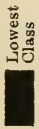
**St. Thomas, Bethnal Green.**

Wesl. Ch., Hackney Rd.

L. C. Miss., 224, Hackney Rd.



The Streets are coloured according to social condition of inhabitants as under:—



Lowest Class



Very Poor



Moderate Poverty



Poverty & Comfort (mixed)



Fairly Comfortable



Well-to-do



Wealthy

Combined colouring (as Pink and Red) indicates a mixture of the Classes which the Colours represent.



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Map M—INNER EAST LONDON (1920)

The figures are coloured according to social conditions of inhabitants as under—  
Moderate (green)    Poor (red)    Very Poor (blue)  
Combined colouring (in Pink and Red) indicates a mixture of the classes which the colour represents

Wesley



## CHAPTER III

### HOXTON, ST. LUKE'S AND CLERKENWELL

#### § I

##### HOXTON

HOXTON is the leading criminal quarter of London, and indeed of all England ; and it is easy to see how pleasantly central and suitable a position it occupies for nefarious projects ; so that it might be not inaptly described as on the 'fence' between rich and poor. 'Wall off Hoxton,' it is said, 'and nine-tenths of the criminals of London would be walled off,' but in saying this a certain class of criminal only was referred to and the proportion is doubtless exaggerated. Of professional thieves, there are two distinct kinds : those who live from day to day by the more casual kind of depredations, and those who lie low while making elaborate plans for some great haul. The latter may maintain a life of apparent respectability, pursuing ostensibly some regular calling, and they bring to bear upon their operations much forethought and some skill. They perhaps have had the training of a carpenter, a blacksmith, or a locksmith. They live the life of the lower middle class. The number of first-class burglars is said to be very small ; with most, daring takes the place of skill. But in playing their game against society, what is regarded as unnecessary violence is avoided as a rule. The

relations of these men with the police are curious, regulated by certain rules of the game, which provide the rough outlines of a code of what is regarded as fair or unfair. Violence is a breach of these rules, or sometimes the result of their breach by the other party, but if 'fairly' taken no ill-will is borne. These men are generally known to the police, and so are the receivers into whose hands they play. Gold or silver stolen anywhere in London comes, it is said, at once to this quarter, and is promptly consigned to the melting pot. Jewellery is broken up; watches are 'rechristened.' The 'fences' or receivers of stolen goods are of all grades, and serve every sort of thief; and in Hoxton thieves of every kind seem to be represented.

As in the days of *Oliver Twist*, the old thieves teach the young. I should suppose that, given some natural capacity in this direction, the very atmosphere of Hoxton would breed handy lads for this business, but it is so much an art that it is said that the supply of young thieves depends on this unindentured form of apprenticeship. I do not know whether the professors are actuated by benevolence only; it would almost seem so; or whether, as one good turn deserves another, the young can sometimes help the old. No doubt in burglaries a boy is often useful. One of the most notorious developments of juvenile crime has been that of bands of boys, called after this or that street and making themselves the terror of the neighbourhood. It is said that the 'bus and tram-car 'cock horse' boys, and those who hang round to share their work, provide some of the worst examples. Of these gangs and their fierce quarrels among themselves, turning on the favour of the girls who consort with them, we have heard strange accounts. One of our informants, a schoolmaster, speaks of the terror exercised by the leaders of these boys over their followers. Sitting safe at home the follower hears the whistle and turns pale,

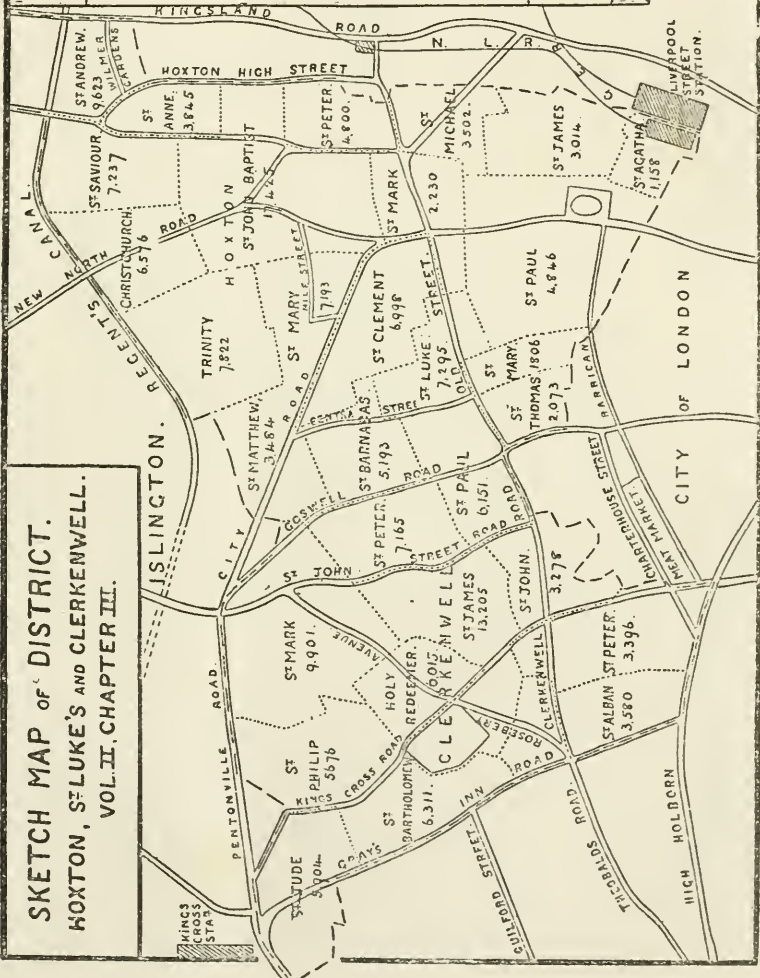
**SKETCH MAP OF DISTRICT.  
HOXTON, ST LUKE'S AND CLERKENWELL.  
VOL. II, CHAPTER III.**

**POPULATION [1891] OF  
ECCLESIASTICAL PARISHES**

GRAYS INN LANE.	FINSBURY	2,714
ST JUDE	ST THOMAS	6138
ST BARTHOLOMEW	ST MARY	5,652
AMWELL	ST PAUL	5,560
ST PHILIP	SOUTH SHOREDITCH	5,636
HOLY REDEEMER	ST AGATHA	7,006
GOSWELL STREET	ST JAMES	3,778
ST MARK	ST MICHAEL	4,334
ST PETER	HOXTON NEW TOWN.	7,981
CITY ROAD	ST MARK	3,069
ST MATTHEW	ST MARY	8,508
ST BARNABAS	TRINITY	6,520
ST PAUL	ST JOHN (UNPARISH)	6,775
ST LUKE		8,597
ST CLEMENT	HOXTON OLD TOWN.	6,638
ST JAMES, CLERKENWELL	CHRISTCHURCH	6,734
ST JAMES	ST SAUVIOUR	12,238
ST JOHN	ST ANNE	4,023
HOLBORN	ST PETER	4,007
ST ALBAN	HAGGERSTON	4,484
ST PETER	ST ANDREW	4,506
		7,365

TOTAL - [1891] - 188,923  
 DECREASING TO - [1901] - 176,702  
 POPULATION [1901] IS PRINTED UNDER  
 THE NAME OF PARISH ON MAP.

FOR OTHER STATISTICS SEE BACK OF MAP.



STATISTICS bearing on the AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 7. Described in Chapter III. (Vol. II.).

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

POPULATION IN		Decrease per Cent.	
1881.	1896.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
196,214*	186,103*	5.2 %	7.7 %

Density of Population.

1891.	1901.	Age and Sex in 1891.	
		Males.	Females, Together.
PERSONS PER ACRE.	AcE.		
1973	Under 5 years	11,757	12,172
	5 & under 15 yrs	20,168	20,250
	— 20 "	9,419	9,256
	— 25 "	8,816	9,044
	— 35 "	15,252	14,945
	— 45 "	11,545	11,812
	— 55 "	7,795	8,288
	— 65 "	4,497	5,215
	65 and over	2,595	3,775
TOTALS	TOTALS	91,664	94,757

NOTE.—The Sketch Map includes the Registration areas of HOXTON NEW TOWN, HOXTON OLD TOWN, parts of HAGERSTON and SOUTH SHOREDITCH, FINSBURY, GOSWELL STREET, St. JAMES'S CLERKENWELL, AMWELL, and parts of HOLBORN and GRAY'S INN LANE. During the decade 1891-1901 Pentonville was combined with Amwell, and many changes have been made in the boundaries of these areas by the combination of sub-districts, so that statistics cannot be given to exactly correspond with the map. In these figures the parts of Hagerston, Holborn (St. Andrew's Eastern and Saffron Hill), and Gray's Inn Lane have been omitted, and the whole of South Shoreditch and Pentonville included. For details of Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

\* Excludes a detached part of Pentonville, which contained 6½ acres and a population of 318 in 1891. Transferred to Hornsey in 1899.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

SEX.		BIRTHPLACE.		INDUSTRIAL STATUS.		TOTAL HEADS.
Male.	Female.	In London.	Out of London.	Employers	Employees	
35,521 80 %	8,764 20 %	28,573 65 %	15,707 35 %	3,622 8 %	32,649 74 %	8,014 18 %

Constitution of Families.

HEADS.	Others Occupied.		Unoccupied.	Servants.	TOTAL IN FAMILIES.
	In London.	Out of London.			
44,285 (1.0)	45,343 (1.02)	90,115 (2.04)	1,972 (.04)	181,715 (4.10)	

SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION according to Rooms Occupied or Servants Kept.

4 or more persons to a room 3 & under 4 2 & " 3 1 & " 2 Less than 1 person to a room Occupying more than 4 rooms 4 or more persons to 1 servant Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants All others with 2 or more servants Servants in families Inmates of Institutions (including servant(s))	PERSONS, PER CENT.	
	PERSONS.	PER CENT.
•	18,024	9.7
•	28,448	15.3
•	52,801	28.3
•	42,824	23.0
•	4,184	2.2
•	25,638	13.7
•	5,148	2.8
•	2,148	1.1
•	528	.3
•	1,972	1.1
•	4,706	2.5
Total	186,421	100

Crowded 53.3 %  
Not Crowded 46.7 %  
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1889) 45.4 %  
" in Comfort " " 54.6 %



but obeys the summons. It sounds romantic and absurd, but, I believe it to be no more than the truth. And to the tragic result of one of these quarrels of a 'belt and pistol' gang, which occurred in Haggerston—when a girl was fatally wounded, and a heavy sentence imposed in consequence—the comparatively orderly state of the streets at the time of our inquiry was attributed. It may be that the blood-curdling pictures of the illustrated gutter press have a stimulating influence, but since few of the boys can read with much facility, the schoolmasters claim, with some show of reason, that the attraction to evil courses cannot be attributed to the influence of bad literature. Romance plays an extraordinary part in life, and certainly not least so in criminal life. Those who have the excitement of crime in its reality perhaps crave least the relaxation of its literature.

When we add to this widespread criminal element a great mass of poverty and extremely low life, fed constantly by demolitions on the City border, and when we remember that over a considerable part of the area anyone who can rise a little in the world is sure to leave (unless indeed his success in life is connected with thieving or dealing in stolen goods) we may understand how terribly difficult is the task of social or religious reform; and are not surprised to hear of the 'moral flabbiness' of the human material with which the clergy have to deal. Both from sanitary and economic causes there is a good deal of physical weakness. The lads like the amusements of their clubs, but shirk active games, for which indeed it is hard to find a place. The people generally live under extremely crowded conditions; it is stated, not improbably, that 'about a quarter of them are chronically out of work,' and it is also said by one of the clergy (with perhaps less exactness) that half his parish seems to get drunk every Saturday night.

Hoxton has not always been poor and disorderly, and although the description I have given draws most attention to the dark and miserable side of life here, this even now is by no means the only side. Jonah's formula is not applicable; many decent and worthy people still live in Hoxton. But the evidence shows that the downward change has been very great. A Wesleyan schoolmaster, for instance, who has lived in the neighbourhood of the New North Road for forty-three years, says that in his earlier years it was an eminently respectable locality. As a young man he remembers going to the Wesleyan Church and sitting in the gallery, the better to admire the costly and beautiful dresses of the ladies. He has seen both the rise and fall of Bridport Place, and the adjoining streets—their building and occupation by decent people earning £150. to £300. a year and their gradual decline to their present state of three families to a house. Within his recollection a Sheriff of London lived in the New North Road, and all along the road the houses were kept by one family. A butcher said to him lately, 'When I came here, soon after you, there was only one family in each house, and they took three or four joints a week: now there are three or four families in each house, and not one joint between them; they go to Pitfield Street and buy the pieces.'

The poverty is not incompatible with there being 'lots of money going.' All seem to live largely in the present; seeking to find alleviation in large expenditure on the pleasures of the moment—the public-house, the theatre, the music-hall, the funeral, the wedding, the jaunt to the Forest, and so on. Drink is the great popular extravagance of the poorer class, and it is to this that the existing destitution is largely attributable. But while there is more drinking there is less drunkenness than formerly.

Women go freely to the public-houses, but not to drink in solitary fashion; with them it is a social usage—they treat a friend or a friend treats them. For children the sweet shop takes the place of the public-house; they are never without money for this indulgence, and they, too, share each other's purchases. In the poor schools a monitor has to go round regularly to pick up the paper screws thrown on the ground. The amount of pocket-money given to these poor children is said on all hands to be extraordinary. 'More than mine have,' says one of the clergy. 'More than I had when I was young,' echoes a schoolmaster. Nevertheless they have not the food they require. If not underfed they are ill-fed.

I do not say that in these matters Hoxton differs greatly from many other districts in London, but merely that these conditions are prominently present here—even more so perhaps than anywhere else—and make religious work exceptionally difficult.

Among this very degraded population, many of whom are without grit, stamina, or back-bone, and among whom sturdiness often tends to criminality, social problems have to be faced as serious as any, and whatever plans may be adopted, men and women and money are required to carry them out. The clergy almost all complain that Hoxton is a bad name to beg with; it is not associated with the ideas of poverty which hang around the 'East End.' For the same reason it is less easy to obtain workers from outside, while the material at hand is even less available for this purpose than in almost any other part. But it cannot be said that even when there is no lack of means to do everything that can be planned, the spiritual results are other than disappointing.

Tested by attendance at church, we find everywhere

small congregations—sometimes hardly any congregation at all; and those who come are often from a distance—old parishioners, perhaps, who have improved their position in life and moved elsewhere, but who remain attached to the religious organization with which it may be their social welfare has been in some way connected. As to the mass of the residents in Hoxton we hear without contradiction that not one grown-up person in thirty, or some say not one in fifty, and some again not one in eighty, attends any religious service. If church-going is to be the test, we have in this a practical record of failure. The churches are High, Low, and Moderate. Everything is tried and, with modifications and partial successes proportioned to the freshness and enthusiasm imported into the work, everything fails. A feeling of hopelessness is evident, mitigated only by the fact that each church may, and often does, become the centre of spiritual life for a faithful few. It is in the results of their personal influence over these individuals, and the slow building, brick by brick, of this their church, that the most earnest of the clergy find consolation. For numerical success we have to turn to the Sunday schools, Bands of Hope, &c., to which children flock in large numbers, and with almost complete indifference to the nature of the religious doctrine taught in them.

The work of the missions is on a grander scale. There are three or four that may be called big, besides a number of smaller ones, to which reference must be made.

The Friends' Mission, Hoxton Hall, in the parish of St. Columba, is a comparatively recent effort, at least under its present management. It was originally a music-hall, has two galleries, and seats nine hundred to a thousand persons. Passing to quite other uses, it became the centre of the blue-ribbon army propaganda in London, and

for many years a great temperance work was carried on. But preaching against alcohol lost its attractive power, and two or three years ago the hall was taken over by the Society of Friends, and has been adapted to the general lines of their work. This mission is an off-shoot of the establishment at Bunhill Fields, and has about one hundred voluntary workers. There is no clinging to the special tenets of the sect, except that there is a small Friends' meeting from 11 to 12 on Sunday morning, attended by a few of the workers. The evening gathering is for ordinary Gospel preaching to all who come, diversified with an occasional service of song. The adult school, with which the day begins, is a small brotherhood consisting mainly of working men, gathered together for the study of the Bible and for mutual social and religious support. This is matched on the female side by the women's help-one-another society, a stricter form of mothers' meeting, which has over one hundred members. They are somewhat above the ordinary mothers' meeting class, all of them being total abstainers and pledged to mutual assistance. They pay 6*d* each for their quarterly tea. Besides having a sick fund, 'rainy-day' fund, and clothing and coal clubs for themselves, they are organized as a maternity society, nursing band, and public-house visiting band, largely for the good of others. I do not know whether these women come from the neighbourhood, but they are certainly not drawn from the low streets which surround the mission.

A more important work, numerically, is the 'Girls' Guild of Good Life,' which has over four hundred members, of the rough factory class. Of these 126, on the average, attend the weekly meetings, and are taught reading, writing, sewing, knitting, drawing, painting, carving, music, and cookery. There are also large afternoon and evening

Sunday schools. The temperance traditions of the place are maintained by Gospel temperance meetings for both sexes on Saturday evening, when the audience varies in numbers from one hundred to two hundred, according to the attractions offered; musical selections by various choirs vying with illustrated lectures. The printed programme adds that 'the pledge can be signed at any time.' There are, in addition, Popular Pleasant Evenings every Wednesday, at which again music is the principal feature, and when, if the programme is pleasing, there may be an audience of one hundred or so.

This is a type of democratic mission, which can hardly maintain its work without some wealthy patronage. The inspiration and support comes, in this case, from the philanthropic ideas and aims of the Society of Friends, and the innermost religious expression consists of a mission church, numbering thirty members, whose simple religious basis is 'Belief in the Lord Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour, and the evidence of a desire to follow Him.'

From this work we may pass to that of the Christian Institute, Hoxton Market, which is impressed with a similar democratic simplicity; but the work attempted is far more extensive. The Rev. Fleming Williams, a Congregational minister who formerly had a church in this neighbourhood, is president, and some assistance in money, and some of the workers, come from Mr. Williams' present church in Rectory Road. But the mission seeks wider support, issuing a monthly record of the work done, as well as a yearly report, begging for subscriptions and donations—food, clothing, boots, and money being 'urgently needed.' The list of operations is prodigious, as is always the case when appeals of this kind are made. The report I have before me speaks of ten years having elapsed since the little 'mustard seed' was planted, that has grown into

this great tree, and claims that 'mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually the years have been years of real and solid progress.' Nor can it be denied that there has been in these years a great improvement in Hoxton Market and the neighbourhood; due, it may be most of all, to demolition and rebuilding, but for part of which the mission may justly claim credit.

The objects in view are stated as 'salvation of the lost, relief of the destitute, rescue of the children, and ministry to the poor.' The evangelist's work is regarded as 'the foundation upon which all other efforts rest'; but if meetings fail they are abandoned, and this mission has not shrunk from discontinuing the Sunday evening services, as well as the Saturday night prayer meetings, because at both only a few of the workers attended, and for them, in this case, *laborare est orare*. Of definite religious work there remain only some small Bible-classes, a few lodging-house services, and the open-air services held during the Summer in Hoxton Market, by means of which, it is said, the 'Gospel is sung and preached to those who cannot be persuaded to enter our doors.' The workers meet for prayer on Wednesday evening.

Although, like the two meetings above referred to, the adult temperance society has been dropped, 'temperance work is not neglected,' and the juvenile total abstinence propaganda is found to be extremely active. The number of the girls alone enrolled increased (during the year) from two hundred to over five hundred. The explanation of this rapid growth quickly follows, for we read in the report that they enjoyed a New Year's party, had excursions in June and September, and ended with a 'monster' Christmas party, all as rewards for 'good conduct, cleanliness, and regular attendance'; marking, it is said, a degree of success which excited the unconcealed envy of 'neighbouring co-workers.'

Both boys and girls subscribe a farthing a week. Drill and musical instruction are added to the weekly entertainments, which go to render the name of temperance attractive to these children. For them, it must be said, drink at present offers no temptation ; but all the same, such work is very good.

There is at this mission a working lads' guild for the poorer class of boys, with one hundred members, for whose amusement various games are provided. These boys subscribe 1*d* a week and manage the expenditure of the money themselves. This guild leads up to the lads' Bible-class, as the next step by which the rough Hoxton boy will, it is hoped, be raised into an upright self-respecting citizen. Other steps are the night school, gymnasium, cricket club, chess club, reading room and library. For the girls there are sewing classes. The mothers, too, have their meeting, but here, as with the Friends, the choice is made of a superior class of women, 'two grades above the Hoxton Market type.' The numbers are not large, and the meeting is self-supporting, even to providing its own charities. At each meeting of the women a short Bible talk is given. In a quite different direction the work includes a labour bureau, which has tried to find 'a short job of some sort' for every applicant, and has found permanent situations for a few.

We come finally to an especially characteristic piece of work carried on for the sake of the children, in the provision of 'children's cheer,' including the distribution of such unconsidered trifles as empty cotton reels, plain and coloured, of simple toys, of oranges and bonbons, and motto cards. A large and headless doll, which we saw, had been loaned out for months until it met its fate. This work falls in especially with the remarkable character of the superintendent, who, while earning his own living as a maker of horse-clothing, fills up his spare time in repairing



old boots or mending broken dolls for use at the Institute. A diary records what is done day by day in the simplest language—the work found, the meals provided ; tells of a loan to a man who had been nine weeks without work and of its repayment ; the lending of a dressed doll to a child ; the payment of 1s to two policemen for escorting two hundred children to Barbican Chapel and back, and an account of the tea and entertainment given to them ; the sending for twenty-four pints of soup to a soup kitchen in Haggerston to be used for the children's halfpenny dinner, and so on. Most of the entries refer to articles of clothing supplied, and to work provided ; the work being chiefly mission cleaning, reckoned at 2d and 3d an hour, with scrupulous exactitude to the nearest farthing. All the missionary work done, both here and at the Friends' mission, is entirely voluntary and unpaid.

The Hoxton 'Costers' Christian Mission,' to which I turn next, is of a more familiar type. It was founded in Golden Lane in 1861 by its present honorary superintendent, and although it has outgrown its name, is still aimed particularly at costermongers. The late Lord Shaftesbury was its president from 1866 until his death. It is connected with the Ragged School Union, and works on thoroughly evangelical lines. It recognises, in its printed report, that the true way to elevate the poor "is to reveal to their hearts the *reality of eternal things*. The Gospel in the home chases away darkness and degradation, and men and women thus influenced become capable citizens and a blessing to society." "Were it not for such missions as these," the report goes on to say, "tens of thousands would never be taught the Word of God ; never hear the language of sympathy or enjoy a helping hand."

There is a long list of 'operations,' sixteen of them being noted as religious, fourteen as social or educa-

tional, twelve as benevolent, and thirteen concerned with temperance or thrift—making fifty-five in all. The religious side of the work here is important. The mission church has over four hundred members, and the large hall, holding seven hundred persons, is filled on Sunday evening with working people, even, it is said, those who have belonged to a very poor class and who, though by living better lives they have improved their position, are still poor. But all are highly respectable and well dressed, and thus it comes about that the congregation are not now, if indeed they ever were, at one with the surrounding population. In the Sunday schools there are two classes: the children of their own people coming in the afternoon, and those of a rougher description in the evening. The mission, by its organizations of one kind or another, touches very large numbers; from these it automatically selects, and in selecting raises. There is a Mutual Loan Society with no less than 3500 members, which necessarily must draw from a wide field, and a Costers' Provident Investment Society with 470 members. There are also two special Friendly Societies connected directly with the mission, and half a dozen Phœnix and other Temperance Lodges which meet in its rooms. Fully three-fourths of the operations do not touch upon religion directly, and these concern by far the larger numbers; but, at the same time, it must be said that the aim of all is to arouse the men, women, and children to the claims of religion, and those who are touched help to fill the large hall every Sunday evening. Charitable relief, by way of help in time of sickness, is no doubt given principally to those who attend the mission services, but the amount is not great and no effort is made to attract by such means the low loafing lodging-house class. This was tried formerly before the mission moved from Golden Lane and the uselessness of the attempt is admitted. But for others of the

poor a great deal is done in many helpful ways, and a very real Christianity is both preached and practised.

The North Central Wesleyan Mission, which is our fourth example of mission work on a large scale, is no less remarkable in its way, but its methods again differ from those of the other three. This mission, like that of the Friends, is comparatively new, and its recent minister a young man full of hopeful energy. He came seven or eight years ago to a dwindling church of less than a hundred members, but raised it sevenfold, and he had every Sunday night an audience of a thousand or more; I am obliged to use the past tense, for this minister has been moved elsewhere, and the crowds he attracted have fallen away. The minister, alive to the fact that Londoners are not naturally church-goers, recognised that exceptional methods are required to get hold of them, and used these without stint and with great success. The secret was the breathing of human life into every function of religion; or it may be put the other way, as the introduction of religion into every function of human life. The energy evolved by this method is astonishing. Everything 'hums' with activity, and is carried on with what the Americans describe as a 'hurrah' of enthusiasm. There would seem to be no time for meditation. The quieter influences of religion are lost; but there is assuredly no time for doubt.

Among the methods adopted for reaching the people are: a medical mission, to which two doctors and a dispenser give their services, assisted in care of the sick by the Sisters of the People, of whom there are four; a bureau for providing legal advice gratis, to which a lawyer gives his services one evening in each week; a slate club with twelve hundred members, found to be particularly useful in obtaining exact addresses, often to be had in no other way, and as giving a reason

for visiting ; and many entertainments, including a free public concert every Saturday night in winter, which draws crowds and is held in the church itself. All this is thrown open to everybody ; everything done is but a means to bring the people in ; but no bargain is made, no terms are exacted. Freely the bread is cast upon the waters. In addition Sunday schools and mothers' meetings on a very large scale afford plenty of work for Christian hands to do. Interest in temperance is sustained by Bands of Hope for the young and Good Templars' Lodges for adults ; and into all these organizations a full tide of social life is poured.

The people are made to see that the mission wants to benefit them in this life as well as in the next ; but with all this something more is needed, and is found in the vigour with which the pulpit is filled. As with the work, so also with the words ; no interests are too mundane for religious association, and if there is a loss of reverence, then reverence must take its chance. Of music, too, full use is made ; every service has its orchestral prelude.

Out of this hurly burly of religion, emerges the true Church, the chosen few, bound together by community of thought in the bonds of Wesley's class-system. This is the final outcome. The methods adopted exactly suit some people, but its limits in this respect are far from being as wide as its field of enterprise—the great wide field of life in London.

I have not hesitated to describe these four missions at some length, because they are at once important locally and very typical. They are all religious ; all preach practically the same Gospel ; all inculcate temperance to the extent of total abstinence from alcohol ; all seek to enter sympathetically and helpfully into the lives of the poor. But each of them approaches the common work more particularly in one

of four different ways. The Friends' Mission is first and foremost a teetotal society ; the Christian Institute rests especially on its humanity and sympathy with the lives of the poor and of the children ; the Costers' Mission relies before all on the power of the Gospel of Salvation ; while the Wesleyans obtain their great force from an unshrinking combination of religion with mundane affairs and business methods. The leaders of each are remarkable, and their personality is reflected in the work. Mrs. Howell, at Hoxton Hall, with her Girls' Guild of Good Life, and Women's Help-each-other Society of total abstainers ; Mr. Burt, living his simple life among the people ; or Mr. Orsman, working for more than thirty years on the gospel lines, aided now by the young generation that his teaching has formed ; and, latest in the field, Mr. Wood, with his invincible energy and preaching power—all have played their several parts in the lives of the people, and a very considerable part it comes to be.

In addition to these, the Presbyterians have a mission in this neighbourhood which confines its work to a group of light blue streets adjoining the Regent's Canal. Its religious and social agencies are numerous, and some of them large. The provident society has nearly fifteen hundred members. Of it the report says : " While this society has undoubtedly been of much material advantage to its members, it is to be regretted that spiritual work can only be carried on among them to a comparatively limited extent." There are also two other missions established in connection with Nonconformist congregations in North London which carry on a similar, but less important work, and there are a few small dwindling congregations whose members are leaving or have left the neighbourhood. The Salvation Army adapted the Grecian Theatre for their meetings, but found it a 'white elephant,' and it has now been closed.

On the whole, if we compare the work of the Church of England with that done by these Nonconformist or undenominational missions, it would appear to be less effective and certainly less wholesale in character. It may be that both in the end reach the same goal of the 'chosen few,' but the road is different. One of the most remarkable of the clergy, when asked as to the nature of the response he was able to get from his people, hesitated somewhat before replying, but finally said he thought it largely a personal one; 'then a sense of duty comes, and a gradual change in life. You can't very well give it a name—conversion? in any case it is a fact, and it needs a good deal of patient, plodding work.' For half a lifetime this man has stuck to his task, and it is by units and tens that his flock is to be counted.

The position of the Church of England here may also be indicated by the view taken by its clergy of the work of others. One of these, speaking of the well-filled mission halls, described them (not without a measure of truth) as 'free and easy services—nothing to pay, and nothing to do.' Another, speaking of the Secularists, said: 'It was supposed that as men would not come to church they would go to the Hall of Science. Not a bit of it: of the two they would perhaps prefer the church, but what they really want is to be left alone.' 'Give a man his pot and pipe and he will be best pleased.'

There has in truth been a great change since Bradlaugh's day, and the Hall of Science has been closed. Working men now turn more to the political attack from the side of Socialism than to the religious attack of Secularism; but, as with the churches, the numbers really deeply interested are comparatively few.

The work of the Church of Rome here, at St. Monica in Hoxton Square, concerns the most difficult

Catholic population in London. Its people are not only extremely poor and very much scattered, but often also bad; contributing fully their share to the vicious side of Hoxton life. The priests divide the work amongst them, and each one practically lives in his particular district, seeking to find and follow up the continually shifting members of his flock. It is not pretended that even half of these attend regularly to their religious duties. If the proportion is no more than a fourth no one could be surprised. The church is free. The payment of 1*d* at the door, common at many of the Roman Catholic churches, is not exacted. Most of those who come give something, but the option is here unusually complete. They are Irish, with a few English who, as it is put, 'have tried everything and want a settled faith.' The leakage that is experienced amongst their own flock is stated to be due to carelessness and indifference, not to the attractions of any other creed or community. The attraction adverse to religion is that of an evil life. Clubs for men or lads, established with a religious foundation, fail. The priests feel that it is useless to attempt to meet men on the basis of pleasure. They cannot compete on these lines with the world, the flesh, and the devil—as represented by the revels of some working man's club or the rattle of the music halls. There are no sisters of charity working here, but a club for girls is successfully managed by four ladies from the West End. The schools are very irregularly attended, the distance from the homes being so great and the class from which the children come so poor and low. But those who attend include a considerable number of Protestant children whose parents care not where they go.

The priests assert that Hoxton has steadily, and for many years, been growing poorer, and in this sense all agree that there has been degradation. They also

confirm all we hear of the character of the population in the worst streets, and corroborate the statement of our other informants that for criminal habits the district has no equal. But in some respects there has been improvement. The place is more orderly; drunken brawling in the streets is less common than it used to be.

## § 2

### ST. LUKE'S

Between Old Street and the City lies a district from which the former inhabitants are being rapidly driven by demolition and rebuilding, either for business purposes or for the erection of block dwellings destined to be occupied by an entirely different class. We have seen some of the effects of this change in the increasing poverty of Hoxton, and in the successive waves of outward-moving population so noticeable throughout North London. The black patch which ten years ago disfigured our map at the corner of Goswell Road has nearly gone, and in the whole district things are greatly changed and changing.

Under difficult conditions the Church of England does its best, and its services, though attended by but very few, are well conducted. The greatest measure of success in attracting the people to church is attained when the aid of music is specially invoked. It is found that good music will always draw a congregation in the evening; but such a congregation is only very partially parochial, for there are many wanderers, especially young men and maidens, whose habit it is to walk out on Sunday evening, and who gladly go to such services as part of the evening's pleasure. The real



congregation consists in every case of a small body of communicants and workers carefully held together. There are plenty of children to be taught in the Sunday schools, but the clergy again complain of lack of funds and lack of workers, and, in truth, if both were not provided from outside, the whole structure would, in most cases, fall to the ground.

At St. Michael's, the southernmost parish of Shore-ditch, the work is quite remarkably concentrated. We are told that the week-day congregations are often as good as those on Sunday, and that for both the numbers are about the same as those of the regular communicants. On Sunday evening a few more come, but the congregations at best are small, and there is a want of workers and funds. The ritual and the practices at this church are no less High than at St. Columba, but less responsive submission seems to be expected from her people; no tests of any kind are imposed. The clubs are freely open to all, and it is averred that the poor who are relieved are not even asked to come to church. It is said that social work is made difficult by the 'cliquiness' of the people: a difficulty which could hardly arise if the Church could appeal to any common faith. But this they cannot do.

St. Clement's is also extremely High and, we are told, 'very active, with gifts and otherwise.' It has innumerable Sunday and week-day services, and draws its not very numerous congregation mainly from outside; but claims, as so many others do, that many who come from a distance are former parishioners. Great difficulty is found in obtaining intelligent teachers for the Sunday school, and living round about there is an enormous population practically untouched. A boys' brigade is the most successful piece of social work. Of the other churches, some are High and some are Low, but all are about equally inoperative.

The vicar of St. Paul's, Bunhill Row, repeats the complaint that he can get no help from outside sources, 'not being the East End.' One person applied to, wrote in reply, that he 'never subscribed except to East End objects.' The population of this parish, which was twelve thousand, is now only six thousand, and of these the greater part, consisting of poor but respectable working-class people, are housed in Peabody blocks. The costermongers who still live in the few remaining courts are the roughest, but in some ways the best off. To get either them or the inhabitants of the buildings to come to church, is regarded as hopeless, but, nevertheless, the services seem to be fairly attended. Failure is comparative, and the sense of it depends on the standard of expectation. One of the neighbouring clergy, for instance, spoke with satisfaction of an attendance at his church of thirty to fifty in the morning and seventy to one hundred in the evening out of a population of four thousand. But, whatever the numbers may be, it is always said, and with truth, that the influence of the Church is much greater than the figures seem to indicate. 'The people come to the clergy when in trouble.'

From St. Mary's, Golden Lane, comes the same complaint of lack of help; the same explanation, 'We are not the East End,' and the same disheartenment as to attendance. 'Even a Bishop would not attract.' The men's club, the most successful piece of work numerically, has no spiritual effect. From the boys' club all are expected to attend church, but the numbers are small. The temperance work is unsatisfactory, 'but it gives ease to the conscience; without it one should scarcely dare to rebuke the drunkard;' a saying applicable, perhaps, to other philanthropic efforts. The vicar of St. Mary's finds no disadvantage, moral or spiritual, in life in block dwellings, provided

the buildings are properly managed, as seems here to be the case. Many think otherwise, and again the difference may lie in the expectation. It is fully agreed on all hands that the people do not come to church. Nor is it for want of asking, since every kind of religious influence is in the field. We hear that 'on Sunday afternoon there are visitors from five different agencies in the buildings bribing the people to come to their meetings,' and the more successful these outside agencies are in this pursuit, the less are the methods adopted approved by the Church.

The Wesleyans are by far the most active Nonconformist influence in the neighbourhood. Wesley's Chapel in City Road is a centre to which strangers come from all parts of the Protestant world, and above all, from the United States, where is found the great stronghold of Methodism. The congregation belonging to the chapel is not large, but every Sunday morning the building is crowded with strangers, and a high standard of preaching is maintained. Connected with this church is an active mission, of an old-fashioned type, in St. Clement's parish. At this mission there is a small body of only fifty-five church members, but all these, and more besides, are active workers, and the mission is an important institution. It has large day schools and schools on Sunday, in the morning and afternoon, with a fair attendance, but the main work consists of the management of a huge Sunday evening school, when no less than one thousand children come, and on special occasions as many as fifteen hundred. Some of these are respectable; others would be termed ragged. The better class of children who used to attend one or other school, now come no longer; perhaps owing to changes in the surrounding population; morning, afternoon and evening schools are now all alike socially, the only classification recognised being by sex, age and ability. All who attend are

fairly clean and tidy. For adults there is a slate club with one thousand members, consisting of men who work, but do not live in the district; and a sick and provident society numbering from five to six hundred. Entertainments are provided for the people, and Christmas dinners are distributed. Other things, such as the mothers' meeting, boys' brigade, &c., are all on a larger scale than those of the Established Church. The services for adults are, however, very sparingly attended.

Situated here is the Leysian Mission supported by the Leys School, Cambridge, a Wesleyan foundation. In the previous volume the Christ Church Mission in Poplar (St. Frideswides) and the Eton Mission at Hackney Wick have been noted, and in other districts we shall come across many more, supported either by colleges or schools. In almost every instance they are active money-spending institutions, filled with youthful enthusiasm, and they usually concentrate their work on some small area chosen because of its needs. The Leysian Mission attempts what is called 'more aggressive' work than is attempted from Wesley's Chapel, but differs still a good deal from that of the North Central Mission at Hoxton. The Sunday morning service is mainly a gathering of the workers, but in the evening the hall, which holds about five hundred, is full. They have an excellent orchestra and choir, to which the success of the service is largely due. By it cantatas are performed and concerts given. There are also endless teas and entertainments. All the accepted Wesleyan Mission methods are adopted and concentrated upon the surrounding population, and undoubtedly do stir the people.

The members of the mission fling themselves into such work as visiting public-houses and blocks of buildings, the conduct of open-air services, and the management of working men's clubs. They struggle

hopefully with the 'reorganization' of temperance work, and with the inherent dulness of the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, to help which a splendid orchestra is got together. They have a 'medical mission' where, 'while the patients are waiting to see the doctor, a bright Gospel service is held, and the hearers are directed to the Great Physician.' And there are two Sisters who visit the poor in their homes. In short, no methods are neglected, and the report is very full of self-congratulation on all that is done. The new developments, they say, in connection with the working-men's club, the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, and the 'Drawing Room' (to which neighbours are invited), 'have secured a considerable addition to the numbers of workers'—never before has the mission had the services of so many old Leysians as now. There is about this kind of religious effort a feverish excitement which makes it difficult to estimate its true value, either on the workers themselves or on the population touched, but in its way it is certainly successful.

Side by side with this a very noticeable work is carried on by the Congregationalists at the New Tabernacle, Old Street, presenting some features which are quite unique. It is to a very great extent a working-class congregation, and extends its influence by means of two mission centres, at each of which, as well as at the Tabernacle itself, schools, Bands of Hope, &c., are established. There is a girls' working league, to make garments for sale, and a sick and provident society. There are also Monday popular lectures and two reading circles, thus indicating the superior character of the adherents of this mission and the high level of aim. But the most remarkable attempt here is that entitled the 'Pleasant Half-hour Society,' for which the Lecture Hall is open every day from 1 to 2 o'clock, the meeting lasting from 1.25 to 1.55. The attractions are varied with concerts and lectures, and once a month a religious

service. Those who attend (without being necessarily members) are the better class of working men employed in the warehouses and factories round about. It is not suggested that this society helps the Church in any way. Indeed, most of the men who attend the meetings live far away. In summer the Pleasant Half-hour gatherings are held out of doors in the garden in front of the chapel. The society itself, which has rules of membership and a subscription of 1*d* per month, is intended not only to facilitate discussion on subjects of the day and of common interest, but to result in the formation of groups for study and reading. By no means all who come to the meetings belong to the society—its rules, as published, are prefaced by the words, ‘As many attendants at the Pleasant Half-hours do not know of this society’—but the great thing is that the people do attend. On the average ninety men come together daily in this excellent way. This good result is doubtless largely due to the chairman, who gives his mid-day hour to this task, being himself employed at night-work on the daily press. The society publishes as its organ a very charming little monthly magazine, *The Silver Arrow*, which is also the organ of the church. It is the best thing of the kind issued in London.

Success also attends the action of the Unitarians, who have an important mission in an adjoining parish. They have gathered together a small local congregation, benefiting perhaps to some extent by the free thought in religion which was aroused by the teaching at the once popular Hall of Science. The workers, as well as the funds, come mostly from a distance, but there are some young people who have grown up with this mission on whom reliance can be placed for teaching in the Sunday schools. Besides two large mothers’ meetings and a strong Band of Hope, the mission has organized a working girls’ club, two cricket clubs,

a gymnasium, and classes for teaching the violin, shorthand, French and elocution; and has an excellent choir. There is also a medical provident club, a convalescent fund and a poor's purse, co-operating with the Charity Organization Society. The work is mainly social, but so in truth is that of the orthodox churches, while in amount accomplished it exceeds that of most of them.

Yet another success of an entirely different kind, but even more remarkable in its way, is that of the Adult School at Bunhill Fields. We have already referred to two smaller specimens of this work. Here we find it on a larger scale. The name is rather misleading. When the idea was first started by the Society of Friends fifty years ago in Birmingham the institution may have been more of a school. Now, here in London, it retains very little of a directly educational character, but is a gathering of devoutly inclined men, or more rarely women, for the study of the Bible and for religious and social co-operation on very democratic lines. The basis is brotherhood, and the motto 'Let brotherly love prevail.' The school at Bunhill Fields consists of from seven to eight hundred members, divided into about eight classes, one of which is for women. There is no idea that the members should necessarily belong to the Society of Friends; the leaders, who preside over and manage each of the classes, probably may do so, but only a very small proportion of the ordinary members are Friends, and theoretically they may elect as leader whom they please. In effect anyone may join the classes: any incomer would be welcome, and merely by regularity of attendance would become a member. But there is nothing to attract the ordinary man in the street. The attraction is for those of a religious disposition; or for the sinner who feels the need of the support of religion and seeks the sympathy of others in this need. The

formal introduction of newcomers is usual ; one man brings another. There is nothing in joining the school to exclude a man from belonging also to some other religious organization. On the contrary, the hour of meeting is made purposely very early (8 a.m.) so that a member may be able also to attend some regular morning service elsewhere.

Amongst the religious efforts of London the place this attempt holds is peculiar. Like many others, it is evidently not what was intended by its originators, who plainly hoped to lift the ignorant and the lost by teaching them first to read, and then to read the Bible. What it does is to provide a very strong religious diet for those whose souls demand it ; and who find what they need, not in priestly guidance nor in sitting under some gifted teacher ; not in the solemn services of the Church, nor in congregational enthusiasm, nor mission fervour—but in open, equal, individualistic, democratic debate on the meaning of the Word of God, and in the interchange of spiritual experience ; their leader being no more than the chairman of their meeting, and their rules of procedure being very much like those of any ordinary debating society. As a religious exercise this system is open to the charge that it tends to feed personal vanity ; the pride of eloquence of argument ; or, still worse, leads to the pose and self-importance of public confession. But I should hesitate to throw discredit upon the open expression of religion, such as this, when no attempt is made to proselytize, and when we see that the brotherhood thus formed leads to excellent work among themselves and for others.

The Society of Friends provides the rooms, and fire, and light, and leadership. The classes meet separately for Bible reading and debate, but together for general purposes. The men meet in the morning, the women in the afternoon. There are provident clubs of various kinds and a large lending library ; but, beyond all else,



the members are bound together by mutual helpfulness: the sick are seen to; those in difficulty are assisted; for those out of work employment is often found. The organization is neither a church nor a charity, but rather of the nature of a Bible-club. A lecture or serious entertainment of some kind is given every Saturday in the large hall, open to the public without charge.

None of the churches or missions I have mentioned can be charged with the begging practices which are often such a disgrace to charity in East London; though some of them complain that the public will not listen to the needs of Hoxton or St. Luke's; but that this difficulty can be overcome has been proved by Mr. Reuben May, whose forty years and more of mission experience are incomparable as a record of the begging art. No accounts are published, and Mr. May and his family no doubt live by the mission; but they also work for it, and the money spent on themselves may be as well, and indeed is probably better spent than that which goes towards the indiscriminate feeding of the people, which is the backbone of this mission work and the sole secret of the attendance of large numbers of the homeless poor, both on Sunday and week-days, at the religious services. So, too, the mothers' meeting, one of the largest in London, is thronged because of the large bonus offered in the shape of a reduction in the price of goods. Some of the women come from a great distance. Poor families living near the mission are systematically visited, and if in want, freely supplied with food. It is a very simple system, and is summarised in the following sentence taken from a report issued in 1896, "*Up to the present time, beyond those of the district, one million different destitute men and women from all parts of the nation and the world have*

received temporal relief and heard the Gospel of the Grace of God read and preached to them here." It is admitted in another paragraph that "it is not permitted to us to see and know all the results of the labour thus done for Christ," but reliance is placed on the promise, "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that whereto I sent it," and on this basis rests the appeal for more funds.

### § 3

#### CLERKENWELL

Here, and in some other parts of London, I have found it convenient, in grouping the parishes for my purpose, to depart slightly from the constituted local boundaries. There is the less objection to this course as for every other purpose the areas differ: the ecclesiastical parish differing from the civil, and police divisions from School Board areas. To each of these in turn my work has had to conform, but now, taking the ecclesiastical parishes as my units, I have in grouping them been guided mainly by the advantage found in treating together contiguous parishes in which the general conditions are similar, and following this general system Central Street has been taken as the line of demarcation between Hoxton and Clerkenwell.

Bad as things are in Hoxton itself, they reach an even more uniformly low level on the borders of Clerkenwell, which, if not more criminal, show at least a lower type of criminality. Through this dark borderland Central Street passes. Further West there is much squalid poverty and rough life, but less crime, and not so dead a level. We have here the remarkable

Italian colony of Saffron Hill, with an extremely low standard of life ; but, on the other hand, alongside of this, there is a considerable infusion of skilled and highly paid workers in the watch making and jewellery trades, while, wherever reconstruction has occurred, the newer model dwellings are adapted for, and occupied by, a rather superior class.

Upon this mixed population all the denominations try their hands. Once more I may compare the methods adopted and consider the results attained.

The most remarkable religious service is that held here in what is commonly called the Hatton Garden Italian Church, or, more properly, the 'Mission Church of St. Peter's, Clerkenwell Road.' The regular congregation is partly Italian, partly Irish ; but Catholics of every nationality are attracted from all parts of London by the fame of the music. The services are conducted both in English and Italian, and all the priests speak the two languages. They hold themselves at the call of Italians throughout the Metropolis.

The Roman Catholic population of the mission district, which was formerly five thousand, is at present estimated at three thousand five hundred. The reduction is mainly among the Irish, and is due to the construction of non-residential buildings in parts previously occupied by them, and to the advent of a non-Catholic population in the new model dwellings which have replaced some of the old slums. The Italian contingent, although individuals come and go, is, in number, practically stationary at fifteen hundred. If, by and by, these in their turn are driven from here by demolition, they will probably form a little Italy in some other neighbourhood. Such branch colonies are to be found in many parts of London, while the evicted Irish seem to be gathering together further West in Kensal Town and Notting Hill.

The community within reach of the Hatton Garden Church is, however, still numerous, and consists for the most part of good Catholics. The Irish are costermongers and labourers. The Italians are best known as organ-grinders and vendors of ice-cream and plaster-casts, but they also undertake some special kinds of labour. Moreover they form a complete community in which a good many find a living by catering for the wants of the others; the more established supplying the requirements of the more itinerant. On the whole they are poor and ignorant. They come from the peasant class, and are far more devout than their fellow countrymen in Soho, who, being mostly waiters, have, by force of association with a sceptical world, or because they come of another class, lost whatever religion they may once have had.

But though, as I have said, the bulk of the Clerkenwell Italians are good Catholics, there are exceptions. There are amongst them some of the followers, or descendants of followers, of Mazzini, who had a school close by. Many of these have intermarried with English women. They are generally Agnostics, but retain a friendship for the old Church, and often send for the priest when dying. Others there are who are vehement Atheists and Anarchists, and bring with them from the country of their birth a great hatred of the Church. Some of these may be honest free-thinking Republicans, but others are desperadoes quite capable of assassinating an enemy.

Of the morals and general conduct of their flock the priests give a very good account. The failing of the Irish is drink, leading to brawls; that of the Italians hot temper, and then, amongst themselves, a knife slips out at times. When trouble occurs between the Italians and English, it is not (so the police say) the Italians who begin the fight. The police report them

as very law abiding, submissive and orderly. In this they resemble the poor Jews ; but, unlike them, do not come to settle here permanently.

In the United States of America, Italian immigrants have in recent years replaced the Irish in the supply of the lowest class of physical labour. It is not so in London. Here the Italians undertake certain special industries and follow a variety of rather peculiar occupations. These seem to have been gradual developments. The hurdy-gurdy boy, with monkey or marmosets, has given place to, or it may be has become, the 'Padrone' who owns a dozen street pianos turned and trundled by gaily decked Italian women, with perchance, instead of monkey or marmoset, a dark-eyed baby in its cot. Other street trades have followed:—as the manufacture and distribution of ice cream in summer, balanced with the sale of roasted chestnuts in winter, both being Italian specialities; and finally, still keeping to the streets and to things naturally Italian, Italian labourers have undertaken the laying down of asphalt pavement.

These people look forward to ultimate repatriation in Italy, and in fact form a slow stream from Italy to England and back to Italy, but many come and go every year, being only in England for the Summer, and in this way tend to maintain old connections, old customs, and old prejudices. They come in small parties from all over Italy; travel slowly, carrying their food with them; and, when Autumn comes, return to their wives and their vineyards. This course of life indicates a considerable exercise of thrift; and thus (as with the poor Jews) the low standard of the foreigner's life is found associated with economic virtues.

The staff of the Hatton Garden Mission consists of five priests and six Sisters; and besides the church there are schools and club rooms. The church is open from 6.30 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. The services of

the Mass on Sunday are at 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 o'clock. The last is High Mass, but the 10 o'clock celebration is the one most generally attended parochially, and the church is then packed to its fullest capacity. At 9 o'clock the sermon is in Italian, and there is also an Italian service in the afternoon. At vespers, as well as at High Mass, the music is a great feature. Not only is there a magnificent permanent orchestra and choir, but often the services of great Italian operatic singers who may be in London are obtained. Taken together, over two thousand persons attend the morning Masses, and a large proportion of these are parishioners. At Easter over two thousand perform their Easter duties. The feast day of the Church, which is in the Summer, is signalized by a great procession through the streets of the Italian quarter, the houses being gaily decorated for the occasion.

A visitor to the church cannot but be struck by the free and frank admixture of class. Not only do the poor come, but rich and poor come together; distinctions of class are absent. There is no idea at all that a shawl over the head cannot hold its own with a bonnet, or even that rags are not respectable. Apart from the League of the Holy Cross, which is the teetotal society, there is practically no social organization. It is hardly thought of. The mixture of nationalities would present great difficulties; but the people live under the ever present influence of their religion, and even if other forms of social or educational stimulus are desirable, the priests do not consider it their business to provide them. They might perhaps regard such influences as leading away from rather than towards the ideal which they hold up. It is only for the young people—boys and girls above school age—that something of this kind is recognised as desirable by the Roman Catholic Church; but perhaps even this is less needed in this population

than in most ; and at any rate nothing seems to be attempted. The schools are well attended.

A good deal of charity is dispensed. The Sisters manage it. No doubt the recipients are expected to 'perform their religious duties,' but this involves neither bribery on the one hand nor hypocrisy on the other, for the duties are freely recognised, whether charity is received or not. But neither the religion nor its charities lead to independence of character. What the people are, that they remain—the children of their Church.

The Roman Catholics have another church in Rosoman Street, serving a smaller and more ordinary population ; and there is St. Etheldreda, in Ely Place, of which the interest is chiefly historic and architectural. Its congregation is small.

For a companion picture to the Italian Mission, I turn to St. Alban's, Holborn, where the services are no less crowded with worshippers, and the work is pervaded by a very similar spirit, though lacking something of the supreme sanction which supports the authority wielded by the priests of the Romish Church. The congregation comes from far and wide. In the hold which the clergy obtain on the neighbouring poor, they owe much to the work of the Clewer Sisters, work which, although devoted, seems to be based to some extent on gifts. The character of the people reached, and, perhaps, to some extent, the character of the work itself, appears to be reflected in the complaint that the power of the Church does not make itself felt among the inhabitants of the block buildings, who are described, with some severity, as being 'too respectable' to be amenable to the influences brought to bear upon them. But failure on these lines, and hollow advantages obtained, which are only another form of failure, are accompanied by

an extraordinary success in personal relations between the clergy and many individuals amongst those who form the congregation, and with the men and lads who join the clubs.

The clergy, two of whom have worked here for more than thirty years, are a veritable brotherhood. Nowhere is the spirit that actuates the High Church movement better represented—a spirit of devoted impassioned work, based on strong convictions of definite doctrine, and carried on without pause or paltering ; sustained, they would unhesitatingly claim, by inspiration from above.

On Sunday, after the early celebrations attended by a few, the church is filled twice in the morning, the earlier of these services (9.15) being that at which the poor and the parishioners more particularly attend, while those from a distance come at a later hour. In the evening the building is only about half full ; the High Church party sharing with Roman Catholics the idea that religious duties having been performed in the morning, the evening may be free. The service is very striking. The interior of the building is impressive, of great length, and adorned with a huge gilt crucifix or 'rood' suspended in mid air. The celebration of the Mass here differs very little from that in Roman Catholic churches, and the demeanour of the worshippers bears witness to the force of their belief in the real and special presence, there and then, of their God. There are also numerous week-day and special services, as well as a number of guilds and brotherhoods and religious classes for young and old. Besides these, there are day schools and Sunday schools, and a night school for girls, as well as sewing classes and mothers' meetings, in all of which the Sisters of Clewer play a considerable part. But, as with the Church of Rome, the work of this church is very much bound up with its services, and its main care is the



religious life thus reflected. Its local influence rests mostly upon the effect that must gradually be produced by the devoted lives of the clergy.

The hardly less beautiful church of the Holy Redeemer, Clerkenwell, with an almost equally advanced ritual, fills a place that is more parochial in character, but its influence over the local poor is not in any way different from that of St. Alban's. Its work again is based largely on the lavish and rather questionable methods of a sisterhood. But apart from this, the clergy have gradually brought together a strong body of communicants, upon whom the organization depends, and for whom practically it exists. The social bond amongst them is even carried to the extent of a *soirée dansante* at the Clerkenwell Town Hall, to which communicants, and they only, are invited. Connected with this church there are large and successful Sunday schools, but the mothers' meeting collapsed under a withdrawal of some of the benefits previously conferred, the women going forthwith where they were more liberally treated. Beyond the usual communicants' guilds nothing else is attempted.

A sisterhood, that of Bethany, is also the principal force in the adjoining parish of St. Philip's, having there its mission house; while St. Peter's Church, St. John Street Road, set in the midst of an eminently respectable working-class population, is active on evangelical lines.

St. Peter's, Saffron Hill, situated amongst the poorest, is the centre of an extensive social work, which is by no means confined to the parish. A parochial girls' club and women's help society, with four hundred members, has been made the basis of an organization called the 'Factory Girls' Country Holiday Fund,' of which the operations are wide spread, the number of girls benefited increasing in the ten years, from 1888 to 1897, from thirty-nine to 1250. Similarly the work

among the children of St. Peter's parish has been made the starting point for a 'fresh-air mission'—by means of which three thousand ailing children, from different parts of London, were sent into the country for change of air in 1897—and for a 'Board school children's free dinner fund,' with many centres of operation in different parts of London. There is a great deal of such work going on now in London, but nowhere is it done with better judgment, or with less ostentation, than here. At the church the congregations are small, the services are old-fashioned, and the doctrine broad. Smaller still are the numbers of those who attend the great church of St. Mark's, Myddleton Square—which still provides a beautiful musical service, and was once the fashionable church of Clerkenwell—or St. Barnabas' in King Square, the 'largest church in North London,' and also once fashionable.

None of these, nor any of the other churches of the Establishment, show anything comparable to the congregations or organization of the High Church; and we turn from them to the Wesleyans or Baptists, or to undenominational missions, to find Evangelical Christianity represented in its full force, striving hand to hand and knee to knee, and of late Sister to Sister, for the religious suffrages of the people against 'Romish superstitions,' as represented by the High Church. How keen the struggle is, may be seen from the fact that even the evangelical clergy complain of its character, and are full of indignation with 'the poaching and bribery,' for which it is asserted the Wesleyans are chiefly responsible—'sticking at nothing.'

Each denomination is described as 'working for itself, and not for Christ.' But as between Evangelicalism and Romanism, of whatever form, the result is never for a moment in doubt. The numbers of those who are reached by simple Gospel services are far greater than those who find spiritual support in the service of

the Mass or in the authority of the Church, even when enforced by the most saintly of men. That this is not more clearly recognised is due to the fact that neither one nor the other, nor both together, reach more than a very small proportion of the population. 'Clerkenwell is godless, if tested by religious attendance.' Thus the field is ever open. But while both sides, and indeed all Christian bodies alike, claim that what they seek is not the sheep from other folds, but those that have no shepherd, the limited ground upon which they really work is shown clearly by the mutual charges of 'sheep stealing' which are continually bandied about.

The most important Nonconformist effort is that of the Wesleyan Central London Mission, a work similar in character to, and even greater numerically than, that of the North Central Mission already described. It adopts all the same machinery, and brings together in Holborn Town Hall, on Sunday afternoon, as well as in its own overflowing church near Clerkenwell Green, a genuinely popular audience. The work rushes forward with a marvellous impetus; but as I have described its peculiarities very fully already, and as I shall have to deal in the next chapter with the still greater development of the West London Mission, I will not go into details here.

A work that is less pretentious, but more solid and more definitely religious, is carried on by the Baptists at Vernon Chapel, under the ministrations of a pastor, who, after five years' service as a seaman in the Navy, 'became a Christian man,' bought his discharge, fell under Spurgeon's influence, and after some years of probation and training embarked in the ministry of this chapel, at a period of great stagnation in its history. In his hands the work has been distinctively spiritual. The congregation, coming increasingly from the neighbourhood, is drawn largely

from the working classes. As with all the Baptist churches, it is not the very poor, not by any means life's failures, who are touched, but the successful members of the upper working and lower middle classes, who are readily merged under this religious influence. From these the minister draws his voluntary workers, of whom about two hundred are employed. The church membership is five hundred, and the evening congregation is said to be about twice that number. There is also a fair gathering on Sunday morning; and the week-day meetings are well attended. Their religion is something very real and very present in the lives of these people from day to day. The theory is that the Gospel is all sufficing; but in practice some concessions are made. There are teas and entertainments, especially at the mission, a cricket club and a 'Christian Cycling Association.' Of temperance societies there are none. In this matter their pastor will recognise no society smaller than the Church itself. 'If you preach the Gospel, that will cut at the root of all sin; convert them to God; if the centre is right, so will be the circumference.'

There is a mothers' meeting and a large and efficient Sunday school; and by means of a special mission and by out-door services, efforts are made to touch a lower class than that of which the congregation consists. These efforts are important as forming part of the work that holds the congregation together, and as occasionally yielding converts; but the real missionary force lies in the influence brought to bear upon the friends and associates of those already attached. In this way others are continually brought within range of the pulpit and into the circle of active Christian life which the church provides.

Vernon Chapel, though the most important, is not the only success of the kind. In Arthur Street, close

by, near the Gray's Inn Road, another energetic pastor has also breathed new life into a dead cause, and has gathered together, and filled with a like religious fervour, a considerable congregation of a similar though perhaps rather higher class. And in Moreland Street, a little to the East, just north of King Square, in a district bordering on the poorest, there is a third active Baptist church, not indeed more than half filled, for the building is large; but attended almost solely by working-class people, drawn from the respectable region to the West. Democratic methods are accepted. At the mission services it is the working men who speak; the pastor, who is an old man, only presides. The work of this almost entirely working-class congregation extends to the neighbouring poor: a very large mothers' meeting, not made 'too religious,' crowded Sunday schools, a huge Band of Hope and Good Templars' lodge, open-air services at the corner of the road, and a special service for neglected children, represent their daily duty to their neighbours. Money enough is found, coming mainly from outside sources, for treats and teas and charities.

Thus the Baptists in this district play a part hardly, if at all, less important than in Shoreditch.

The Congregationalists are represented by a church which relies largely on music, and succeeds in attracting a considerable proportion of men. It has an excellent orchestra and string band, and in its 'P. S. A.' provides a lively Sunday afternoon service. But the working classes are not touched in any great numbers, nor the poor at all. It is a middle-class congregation. The same denomination has also an empty church in the poor district near Goswell Road, which probably will be closed. 'The future,' they say, 'is dark.'

Of Evangelical missions there are quite a number

here, amongst them being the 'Field Lane Ragged School and Mission'; the Peel Meeting House of the Society of Friends; the 'Fox Court Ragged School Mission'; the 'Lamb and Flag' and the 'Fox and Knot' Missions, and, largest of all, the 'Watercress and Flower Girls' Mission,' which, though its work is widespread, has its headquarters in Clerkenwell, and draws many to its services there. The special work of this mission among the London flower girls has half-a-dozen centres, and deals with an income of over £6000, secured by a very elaborate system of appeals to the public. This part of the work is very slightly connected with Clerkenwell; but there is here a cripples' branch devoted to the manufacture of artificial flowers. The mission church has really nothing at all to do with the flower girls, and financially it is quite distinct. It maintains Gospel services, and fills its mothers' meetings and its schools locally. Free meals are largely provided, and treats are numerous. So, too, the Field Lane Institution in Vine Street, which has established industrial homes for boys and girls at Hampstead, has here its refuges and crèche, ragged schools and ragged church, and all the ordinary machinery of mission work, based, we are told, 'on the great Evangelical truths which have ever formed the groundwork of the institution.' The refuges seem to be carefully managed; the cases are sifted, and the numbers received not great. The ragged church is more wholesale in its methods. It is a Sunday service for tramps, attended by about five hundred men and perhaps fifty women. To each is given a cup of cocoa and a piece of bread. In winter the place is full. From this gathering suitable cases are selected for assistance in the refuges. The same men often have been to some other mission or to Mr. Reuben May for their breakfast. They take the Gospel as it comes, and if asked to stay for an after meeting, will remain

in the hope of getting something more to eat. They are impossible to deal with as a class, and the main object of the Field Lane organization is to select from the mass the few cases in which more definite help can be successfully given. The Gospel is preached to all, but those who preach it refrain from boasting of the millions who have been influenced in this way. A very large mothers' meeting and a sewing class for girls are held, and in addition to Sunday schools, morning, afternoon and evening, there are Bible schools for girls on Friday evening, seniors and juniors, with four hundred and fifty on the books and three hundred in average attendance. All these institutions cater for a low class, which is freely encouraged by treats and benefits of various kinds, as well as by charitable relief on a large scale. The value of this work cannot be rightly considered apart from the industrial schools, and is in any case very difficult to gauge. Looked at as a local religious influence, its value is probably extremely small, and socially it may even be a minus quantity; but even if in some ways mistaken, it is undoubtedly an honest enterprise.

The Fox Court Mission is situated near St. Alban's Church and works upon the same population. Here, in addition to the new block dwellings already mentioned, some of the worst courts have made way for business premises, and the inhabitants have been dispersed. The Missioner, who for more than forty years has been connected with the Fox Lane Ragged Schools, speaks of the transformation that has taken place. Where the old houses are still occupied by the old class no improvement can be traced: 'A nest of violent thieves;' 'Many who do nothing and seem to live very well;' 'Convicted half a dozen times'—such are the expressions used by the clergy and missionaries, and we hear also of a baby abandoned by

its mother picked up inside the church, and of 'riotous conduct, resulting in the death of one of our school children, shot in the head as she was passing by a street fight, bound on an errand.' The police, too, describing court after court in an ascending scale of respectability, speak of 'very rough—thieves'; 'very rough—some thieves'; 'very rough—no thieves'; while our own notes help us to complete the picture with such comments as 'dark, messy, airless courts'; 'refuse shot outside instead of into the dustbins'; 'bread and paper lying about'; 'children very dirty and pale.' All this being within a few yards of High Holborn!

The Friends' Meeting House is interesting as showing, in a very remarkable way, the uniformity of development on 'mission lines,' as the methods adopted to reach the people are commonly called. The young men from the Friends' Missionary Training Home are here the principal workers, and the chief interest centres round the young people's club. The club rooms are open nightly. There are string and brass bands; football and cricket for young men, and lawn tennis for young women. The brass band has proved a great attraction, and is said to have 'fully justified' itself, although such an innovation is regarded with grave doubt by some. 'The Friends in charge think it best to allow it at present in consideration for the young people whom the band has been the means of drawing together,' and so they 'leave it to their judgment under the guidance of Him whom they desire to serve.' It is also interesting to note that the military machinery of the usual 'boys' brigade' has been retained, but turned in the direction of 'ambulance work.'

Within a short distance of the meeting-house, and working in the poor and crowded courts north of Smithfield Meat Market, are the Lamb and Flag



and Fox and Knot Missions. The former was one of the early ragged schools, and most of its present workers were formerly scholars. The missionary in charge is a man of pleasant face and manner, and in thinking of him, an agreeable picture presents itself, of children in one of these dark courts rushing up for a friendly greeting. He has been long engaged in the work, and many of the parents of to-day have passed through his school. He is but one of many who devote themselves to this service. Nowhere are pale, pinched, childish faces more commonly to be seen than in Clerkenwell, but nowhere is more effort being made to brighten their lives and lead them aright.

#### § 4

##### LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

Apart from the merest routine work, the Shoreditch Vestry\* did little or nothing for thirty years except build its Town Hall, but during the last few years there has been a great change. The late rector, who was formerly chairman, gives a serious account of the jobbery and corruption, the feasting and drinking, which once prevailed. But of the vestry as last constituted he speaks very highly, describing some of its working-class members as 'excellent.' In this he is supported by others. 'Vestry pretty brisk'; 'vestry greatly improved'; 'local sanitary authority one of the best'; 'model vestry, some high-class men on it,' are amongst the opinions expressed by the clergy and ministers. Another authority spoke of it as 'enterprising and conducted with keen business instinct, but quarrelsome.'

The territory ruled by this vestry included Hoxton and Haggerston.

It was a strongly Progressive body politically, and has had as Vestry Clerk (now Town Clerk) a man of remarkable energy and resource, full of enthusiasm for his work. The result has been great municipal activity, the full effects of which it is yet too soon to judge.

The centralizing of a number of municipal institutions on one site has been a great achievement. The dust-destroyer serves or helps to drive the dynamos which furnish electric light, and the waste steam is utilized to heat water for the baths and wash-houses. Adjoining these works a public library and museum have been erected, and near by stands the technical institute. In these educational institutions Shoreditch has been helped by the London County Council and by private benevolence. The result is a group of buildings of great municipal value, as well as a public garden, all obtained, so far as appears, with little additional burthen on the rates.

The population of Shoreditch has been slowly decreasing since 1861, the decrease being due to demolitions of old property and the erection of warehouses and factories in the southern portion of the district. In the northern part there may have been an increase. But whether the population be increasing or decreasing, the crowding is everywhere worse.

Health is reported as being 'excellent,' 'wonderfully good,' 'good, but for infant mortality,' 'exceptionally good, considering the dense population.' It is explained further that the place is 'naturally healthy, and only made otherwise by defective drainage, which is at last being put right.' Birth-rate and death-rate are both high. In the sanitary department much work has been done in making up leeway, but there seems to be still 'a great deal that wants doing.' In the matter of public drainage 'nothing had been done for years, and many of the old sewers had to be relaid, having become simply elongated cesspools.'

The houses are fairly well built, but the evils connected with overcrowding are aggravated (so we are told on all hands) by the stinginess of the principal land owner, and by the way in which his estate is managed. The property is very valuable. There is never a house to let. A local firm of house agents have, it is said, 'made the fatal discovery that sub-let and crowded houses pay the best;' and the effect is disastrous. But in the Wilmer Gardens tenements the tenants 'sub-let surreptitiously, in spite of eviction if discovered.' 'It is common for each room to be let separately.' In fact, to sum it up, rents are high and people crowded, and a hundred evils follow. Thirteen families, we are told, were found in a single house in Essex Street. 'Improvements made in housing elsewhere have been bad for Shoreditch.'

The substitution of blocks of dwellings for smaller houses has been attended with improvement when an entirely different and superior class has come in, but not otherwise. The possibility of decent life in buildings depends on the care taken; and, with the poor who take no care themselves, this means that whether they are a home or a hell depends on the official caretaker. On the whole models in Shoreditch are reported as 'distinctly worse than an average house.' Some of the older blocks are gloomy and forbidding; but it is left to some of the newer ones to show the full possibilities in this direction. One of these, a block of 'quite new models, being shoddy built, is rapidly becoming the worst bit in the parish.' The structure of this block is thoroughly bad, and the dwellings have been overrun, and crowded by very low-class people from the 'Nichol.' Another block of 'residences,' built in place of old, insanitary, ruinous houses, have, 'since their erection, been a frequent and recurring cause of trouble, arising from original defective construction and continued mismanagement.' They

were avoided by all but the least desirable people, and, becoming a nuisance, were ordered to be closed. Some of the tenants were, with much effort and some delay, persuaded to leave; but the rooms vacated were at once occupied by others of like character. Then the water was cut off, and the foul conditions became so serious as to compel forcible evictions. Since this happened the owner has made substantial repairs; but the main structural defects remain, and a recurrence of trouble is only to be expected.

Wilmer Gardens, already mentioned, is another such case. The small houses, which were pulled down, were bad; but the tenement houses that have replaced them are worse. In the old days some decent families lived here; these, when they lost their homes, went to Walthamstow or Tottenham—the worst remained in the neighbourhood. The present buildings received all the riff-raff. Their owner became bankrupt, and the buildings have since changed hands once or twice. Rents can with difficulty be collected; and if one set of tenants is evicted, the next to come in is no better. All who come are poor. If not reckless and bad to begin with, they are apt to become so. They are people with many children. No one desires such tenants; and if they wish or are constrained to leave, they find it difficult to obtain quarters elsewhere. The visitors from one of the large missions, going round one Sunday morning with tickets for a free meal, found over six hundred children to invite from this ill-starred group of houses.

The evils of reckless, irresponsible ownership, and faulty construction, combined with weak or bad management, were perhaps even exceeded in the case of one side of Hoxton Market, where for a time there was no legal owner, and squatters had possession. Improvement there dates from the time when this state of things came to an end. The power of the owners

of houses, for good or for evil, over the lives of the people cannot be too strongly insisted on.

In the management of its streets, Shoreditch stands well as compared to any of its neighbours. There are about forty miles of streets in all, twenty-five miles being in macadam, fifteen in stone, one in wood, and one in asphalt. Each street is swept every twenty-four hours—the main streets at night, the others in the day. Underground conveniences have been arranged, and other improvements have been made, which include a housing scheme carried out jointly with the London County Council, in connection with the destruction of bad property in the Nile Street area, of which the social and financial results will be watched with interest.

Altogether we have in Shoreditch an example of vigour and vitality in local government very much to be commended. That mistakes will be made and anticipations not always realized, is to be expected ; but if the present spirit prevails, not only will its own lesson be learnt, but one of value will be given to other municipal bodies.

St. Luke's parish, or sanitary area, has in the last thirty years lost fully a third of its former population, and of those that remain one-fifth are now housed in model dwellings. This transformation of the district will doubtless continue till scarce anything remains of old St. Luke's. Meanwhile it is the obvious task of the local authority (now the Finsbury Borough Council) to see that the best public advantage is taken of the changes going on and to prevent, if possible, the overcrowding of the remaining courts. Although this has not always been done, considerable improvements have been effected in the sanitary and structural condition of both houses and streets. The parish was by itself hardly large enough to

venture on any big scheme, but acting in conjunction with the London County Council, it was able some years ago to carry through an important improvement in Golden Lane.

In Clerkenwell the population has been comparatively stationary, the substitution of warehouses for dwellings which in itself led to a considerable decrease having been counterbalanced by the erection of many-storeyed model blocks. At the same time the authorities are increasingly vigilant in checking overcrowding. But even if successful in this, much is left to be desired as to housing, in a district where there are so many one-room tenements, where the limited accommodation and very high rents form a standing difficulty, and where the use of cellars as living rooms cannot be always detected. Nevertheless, the conditions of housing are improving, partly because of the block dwellings, which are mostly well arranged and managed, and partly through the action of the vestry. Many old rookeries are gone, but others remain. There are still to be found courts and alleys open only at one end ; and houses without through ventilation, old and damp and noisome. Much is thus left to be done, although health is said to be good, or at least to have improved, and the death-rate compares favourably with that of adjoining inner districts. But in this respect also, there is scope for increased administrative energy, for fever and diphtheria are frequently present, even in the newer blocks of buildings. As to sanitation a considerable amount of work has been done, and the main drainage is satisfactory ; the staff, however, is insufficient to deal adequately with the amount of inspection required, increased as this task is by the multiplication of workshops, numbers of which have been erected on back garden spaces.

The streets are fairly cared for. Wood pavement is used to a considerable extent, and asphalt has been laid down in some of the poorer streets. Electric lighting is in the hands of private companies, and there are no public baths or wash-houses, but handsome municipal buildings have been erected.

The reputation of the Clerkenwell Vestry suffered somewhat to the very end from past notoriety; for there used to be much drinking and guzzling. All that, however, had ceased some years before the Act of 1900 came into force, and the improvement is admitted; the general opinion as regards recent years being of work well and efficiently done. Some even think that the pace had been too fast, and welcome a certain amount of reaction. Still every reform instituted has been maintained. Others there are who complain that property owners are able to retard though they cannot prevent the carrying out of sanitary work. On the whole, however, we have a satisfactory picture of a satisfactory state of things in local government.

Clerkenwell was one of the earliest districts in London to adopt the Free Libraries Act. The library is well arranged and well used. The 'open system' of lending books has been adopted, by which those who obtain tickets are allowed direct access to the shelves. It is interesting to note that this plan works well and tends to increase the demand for history and biography and travel as compared to fiction.

Poor Law administration in the area covered by this chapter is in the hands of the Shoreditch and Holborn Boards of Guardians. In Shoreditch 'a strict systematic settled policy' has been adopted, and is 'steadily adhered to.' Out-relief, though not refused, is held tightly in check by thorough inquiry, and by drawing to the utmost on relatives and charitable agencies. Every application is considered by the full

Board of Guardians; a plan conducing greatly to uniformity of treatment, which is made possible by the manageable size of the union and the limited number of applicants. The consequence is said to be that 'a feeling gets abroad that application to the guardians means many awkward questions and much trouble,' and so many manage without parish relief who 'would come readily enough if the way were made easy.' In comparing this policy with that of a 'more generous' giving of out-relief, it must be admitted that there is in this part of London a smaller contingent of 'respectable deserving poor' than are found in less central districts, and that this is a point in favour of the Board.

Clerkenwell and St. Luke's go with St. George's, Holborn, and certain Inns and Liberties not herein included, to form the Holborn Union. The guardians in this case give out-relief in small sums to a large number of persons. Relief is administered by committees, for whose guidance an excellent code of rules has been framed, but these are by no means strictly observed. The consequence is lack of uniformity, Clerkenwell, it is said, being laxer than St. Luke's. The union has two large workhouses, and so is able to separate the more robust inmates from the aged and infirm. The aged and the children are very well cared for, as are also the sick, but the overcrowded condition of the infirmary has led to an undesirable amount of out-door medical relief.

St. Luke's is peculiarly rich in endowed charities. Of these there are two main groups known respectively as the 'Gift Estates,' and the 'Parochial Charities.' From the former (which was managed by a committee of the late vestry), forty-five old people receive pensions of £12 a year; twelve receive larger sums, amounting in some cases to 20s and 26s a week; and thirty-six others have an annual dole of £1; £350 is given



in bread and coal tickets, mainly to the pensioners, and another £450 is devoted to educational purposes. The 'Parochial Charities,' with an income of nearly £4000 a year, are controlled by a board of trustees, variously elected. Pensions of £18 or £25 a year each are given to about forty old people (half of whom have also almshouse accommodation), and £1000 is spent on education. In addition, £5 scholarships are instituted at Board schools, the effect of which is usually to keep the children at school a year or so longer; and clothing outfits are provided for those entering situations, about one hundred of these being allotted each year. There are also free lectures, which seem to be a failure, and certain grants to hospitals and convalescent homes.

Both groups of charities are worked under a revised scheme drawn up by the Charity Commissioners, but are still complained of as injuring the district by attracting to it a number of poor people.

The main structural changes in this district in recent years have been the cutting of Rosebery Avenue through a mass of poor property, and the demolition of the old Clerkenwell House of Correction, followed by the building on the same site of a huge block required by Government for the Parcels Post.

In forming Rosebery Avenue, a double object was kept in view: to provide, in the first place, a good and direct thoroughfare leading from Islington (in the neighbourhood of the Angel) to the South-West; and, secondly, to effect a clearance in some of the poorer streets and courts of Clerkenwell. Both objects have been realized, and although there is nothing impressive about the new road, it has answered its purpose well, and, especially at its southern end, affords a strong contrast to the poor quarters through which it has uncompromisingly pushed

its way. It here forms a viaduct imitating, in humble fashion, that of Holborn, flanked by dwellings instead of stores and offices. The streets below are mean, and as seen from these the new buildings tower above, with at any rate something of the advantage that comes from size, and if the observer takes his stand at the lower end of Mount Pleasant he finds around him a striking assemblage of representative bits of old and new London: the great blocks of modern model dwellings, sacrificing all æsthetic and many human considerations in the endeavour to house many people under sanitary conditions in a central situation; with here and there tall factories and the great Parcels Post establishment, which is itself a microcosm of the industrial position of London; and, finally, the broken streets of old houses, which afford glimpses of the purlieus of the poor Italian Colony, alike reminiscent of the past and suggestive of administrative tasks yet to be performed.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. MAP J. (VOL. II., CHAPTER III.)  
East Central.

Adjoining Maps—N. North London (Vol. I.). E. Inner East (p. 110). S. City.  
W. West Central (p. 208).

**General Character.**—The map comprises the districts of Hoxton, part of Shoreditch, Finsbury, St. Luke's, Old Street, Clerkenwell, and part of Holborn; it therefore includes some of the oldest parts of London. In Clerkenwell and St. Luke's are situated the Charterhouse, St. John's Gate, the ancient burial ground of Bunhill Fields, Clerkenwell Close and Green, the sites of St. Chad's and Sadler's Wells, the New River Head, &c. The rich have long since left, though many of their charitable benefactions survive. The character of the whole locality is now working-class. Poverty is everywhere, with a considerable admixture of the very poor and vicious. The eastern part of the district leaves a dismal and dreary impression on the visitor: there are no visible features, either natural or artificial, to arrest the attention. The whole area is affected by its central position and its proximity to the City. Large numbers have been and are still being displaced by the encroachment of warehouses and factories. Some special modern characteristics may be mentioned. Hoxton is known for its costers and criminals, Curtain Road for its furniture trade, St. Luke's for its thieves, Clerkenwell for its watch and metal industry, and Saffron Hill for its Italians.

No servants are kept except in the main shopping streets and in a few remaining middle-class squares in the West.

**Poverty Areas.**—Over the whole map are large blots of blue and black. Wilmer Gardens (*vide* p. 158) in the North-East is, perhaps, the worst street, with thieves, prostitutes, bullies, flower-sellers and cadgers, having received incomers from Boundary Street. Small patches of poverty round the City are Norfolk Gardens in Shoreditch, the Hatfield Street area off Aldersgate Street, and Verulam Street off the Gray's Inn Road. Other and larger blocks of poverty and vice are round about Nile Street in Hoxton, in the triangle formed by Goswell Road, City Road, and Old Street, and round Saffron Hill in Clerkenwell. On the whole there is improvement due to demolitions.

**Employments.**—*For men.*—Boot-making, cabinet-making and allied trades round Curtain Road, costers in Hoxton: saddlery and harness-making, printing and some tailoring in Finsbury; watch, jewellery, precious stones and metal-workers in Clerkenwell; and a large number of carmen, draymen, warehousemen and other City workers living in model dwellings. The poorest are market porters, shoeblacks, newspaper runners, kerbstone merchants, ice-cream sellers, &c. *For women.*—Cardboard-box, match-box, envelope, lead-capsules, tie and mantle-makers, among whom are many home-workers. Those living in the district for the most part work in the district or in the City: a very large number also come in to work from outside.

**Housing and Rents.**—The convenience and accessibility of Hoxton, St. Luke's, and Clerkenwell make house-room in great demand, even though the advantages of situation are largely counterbalanced by an evil reputation for poverty and vice and the absence of open spaces. The typical Hoxton house is of two storeys: in St. Luke's and Clerkenwell it is more often of three storeys, having been built for the middle-class, but now let out in tenements; such new building as there is that is not for business purposes takes the form of high model dwellings. In Shoreditch the average rent for single rooms is 2s 6d to 3s 6d, and for two rooms 5s to 6s. In a large block of models three or four rooms and a scullery fetch 9s to 12s.

In Clerkenwell, Peabody Buildings offer three rooms for 6s 3d to 7s 6d; Guinness Buildings three rooms for 6s 6d to 7s 6d. Another very large block, with 468 separate tenements, asks 2s 9d to 4s for one room, 5s 6d to 6s 6d for two, 8s to 9s 6d for three, and 10s to 10s 6d for four; all are taken, and there is a long waiting list. In big tenement buildings front rooms let at 4s and back rooms for 2s 6d or 3s. In the models off the Gray's Inn Road rents are from 3s 9d for one room to 9s 6d for three rooms; 6d less is asked for rooms on the top floor. Throughout the district rents are rising, and have risen since the date of this inquiry; and there is much complaint of crowding.

**Markets.**—The chief market streets are Hoxton High Street, Whitecross Street, Smithfield Market, Leather Lane and Exmouth Street. In Hoxton Market the ruling prices were (May 1898) beef steaks 3d to 10d per lb., scraps of meat 2d per lb., fair and good mutton chops 4½d and 7½d each, good bacon 6d and 7d per lb., inferior quality from 3½d. Potatoes 3 lb. for 2d; large cabbages for 2d. Bread 7d per 4 lb. loaf (bread famine riots in Italy—wheat quoted in London at 48s to 56s the quarter).—Coal 1s per cwt. in sacks. In Leather Lane bacon was offered at 2½d to 6d per lb., meat scraps from 3d per lb. Strawberries 4d per lb. Bread 6d for a 4 lb. loaf. Kippers 1d a pair or 'all mild 2d a pair.' (June, 1898.)

**Public-houses.**—Public-houses and beerhouses are freely and fairly evenly distributed over the whole district: there is not so large a proportion of beerhouses here as in Bethnal Green. A common notice in public-house windows near the City is 'cut from the joint and two vegetables, 6d.'

**Places of Amusement.**—The best known are the 'Standard' theatre in Shoreditch, the 'Britannia' and the 'Variety' theatres in Hoxton, and 'Sadler's Wells' in Clerkenwell. Two 'houses' a night are usual. Public-houses supply frequent 'friendly leads,' Mondays and Tuesdays being the favourite evenings.

**Open Spaces.**—Conspicuous by their absence. A few small squares are open to the public, but the nearest large open space is Victoria Park. The main currents of air through the district are given by the City Road, Old Street, and Rosebery Avenue.

**Health.**—Fairly good, even in such poor quarters as the Nile Street area. The whole district lies low on a bed of sand and gravel, but well above high-water mark.

**Changes of Population.**—The great change during the last ten years has been the displacement of dwelling houses by warehouses and factories, the last to leave the more central parts being the very poor or the inhabitants of model dwellings. This is seen in the remaining isolated 'dark blue' and 'black' patches in the parishes of St. Leonard, St. Thomas, St. John and St. Alban: and in the 'purple' blocks of 'models' in the parishes of St. Mary and St. Paul, Bunhill Row, along the southern edge of the map. The poor, displaced by demolition, having first tried to crowd into neighbouring streets and only partially succeeded, have been forced further afield, going often as far as Tottenham or Walthamstow. It is possible that, owing to the advantages of a central position and the existence of houses suited to them, there may yet be a return of the 'comfortable' classes: there are signs of it in Hoxton in cases where houses have been thoroughly done up and the rents raised; the forces against it are the present reputation of the district and the absence of open spaces.

**Means of Locomotion.**—The City and South London Electric Railway cuts through the centre of the district, running from the Angel in Islington down the City Road to Finsbury Pavement, and thence across the City into South London and Clapham. The Great Eastern Railway skirts the eastern edge of the map, and the Metropolitan its southern and western

sides. There are fairly frequent, but slow horse-tramways northwards along the Kingsland Road, City Road, New North Road, Goswell Road, and Farringdon Road. The service East and West is confined to a line along Old Street which is continued westwards to Bloomsbury and eastwards to Hackney and Whitechapel. The congestion of trams is most marked in Finsbury Pavement. A great change might be effected by making Finsbury Square an open public garden and tram terminus, well lighted, and with kiosques and benches where people might wait, and so obviate the ugly crushes at present to be seen round the tramcars in the centre of the crowded Finsbury Pavement. Faster services and a continuation of existing lines across the City and river into South London, are wanted. Omnibuses along all the main routes supply a slightly more rapid if less comfortable means of transit.

### PLACES OF WORSHIP.

**List of Parish Churches** situated in the district described in Chapter III., with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped in their ecclesiastical parishes.

#### **Christ Church, Hoxton.**

Christ Church Miss., Poole St.  
Barbican Cong. Ch., New North Rd.

#### **Holy Redeemer, Clerkenwell.**

St. Peter & St. Paul (R. C.), Rosoman St.  
Field Lane Miss., Vine St.

#### **Holy Trinity, Hoxton.**

#### **St. Agatha, Shoreditch.**

#### **St. Alban, Holborn.**

Fox Court Miss., Gray's Inn Rd.  
St. Giles Ch'tn. Miss., Brooke St.

#### **St. Andrew, Hoxton.**

P. Meth. Chapel, Philip St.  
Nasmyth Hall (L. C. M.), Canal Rd.

Costers' Hall, 242, Hoxton St.  
Gospel Temp. Miss., Ware St.  
Kingsland Gospel Temp. Miss., 299, Kingsland Rd.

\*North Central Miss., Canal Rd.

#### **St. Anne, Hoxton.**

St. Anne's Miss., 58, St. John's Rd.  
Hamond Sq. Miss.

#### **St. Barnabas, King Square.**

Bapt. Chapel, Moreland St.

#### **St. Bartholomew, Gray's Inn Rd.**

St. Bartholomew's Miss., North Mews.  
Bapt. Chapel, Cubitt St.

#### **St. Clement, City Road.**

Wesl. Miss., Radnor St.  
Domestic Miss. (Unit.), George Row.

#### **St. James, Clerkenwell.**

Woodbridge Ch., W'dbridge St.

#### **St. James, Curtain Rd.**

Bapt. Chapel, Wilson St.  
Lockhart's Miss., Paul St.

#### **St. John, Clerkenwell.**

London Central Wesl. Miss., St. John's Square.  
Peel Meeting House (Friends), St. John's St.  
Lamb & Flag Miss., Red Lion St.  
Fox & Knot Miss., Charterhouse St.

#### **St. John Baptist, Hoxton.**

St. John's Miss., St. John's Rd.  
St. John's Miss., Vestry St.  
Jireh Bapt. Ch., East Rd.  
North Central Wesl. Miss., New North Rd.  
Bible Christian Ch., East Rd.  
Bethesda (Brethren), 1A, New North Rd.

#### **St. Jude, Gray's Inn Rd.**

Wesl. Chapel, Liverpool St.  
New Jerusalem Ch., Argyle Sq.  
Cabmen's Miss., Gray's Inn Rd.

#### **St. Luke, Old St.**

Christian Com'nity Hall, Old St.  
Hope Miss., Banner St.

\* Now closed (1902).

**St. Mark, Myddleton Sq.**

St. Mark's Parish Rm., Merlin Pl.  
Claremont Cong. Ch., Pentonville Rd.

M. Zion Bapt. Ch., Chadwell St.  
Salv. Army Hall, Rawstone St.

**St. Mark, Old St.**

Whitfield's Tabernacle (Cong.),  
Leonard St.  
Miss., Vincent St.

**St. Mary, Golden Lane.**

Miss. House, Warwick Pl.

**St. Mary, Hoxton.**

St. Mary's Miss., Nile St.  
Providence Cong. Ch., Regent St.  
\*Grecian Theatre (Salv. Army),  
City Rd.

**St. Matthew, City Rd.**

\*Cong. Ch., City Rd.

**St. Michael, Shoreditch.**

Cong. Ch., Old St.  
U. Meth. Fr. Ch., Willow St.

**St. Paul, Bunhill Row.**

Wesl. Ch., City Rd.  
Welsh Wesl. Ch., City Rd.  
Friends' Mtng. House, Roscoe St.

St. Joseph's (R. C.), Lamb's  
Buildings, Bunhill Row.  
Leysian Miss., Errol St.

**St. Paul, Clerkenwell.**

St. Paul's Miss., 85, Goswell Rd.

**St. Peter, Clerkenwell.**

St. Peter's Miss. Ho., 195, Goswell Rd.

**St. Peter, Hoxton.**

St. Monica (R. C.), Hoxton Sq.  
Christian Inst., Hoxton Market.

**St. Peter, Saffron Hill.**

St. Peter's Miss., Onslow St.  
St. Etheldreda (R. C.), Ely Pl.  
St. Peter (Italian R. C.), Clerkenwell Rd.  
Bapt. Miss., 24, Cross St.

**St. Philip, Clerkenwell.**

St. Philip's Miss., St. Helena Pl.  
Spa Fields Cong. Ch., Lloyd Sq.  
Vernon Bapt. Ch., King's Cr. Rd.  
S. Army Hall, 93, Pent'nville Rd.

**St. Saviour, Hoxton.**

Bethel Bapt. Ch., Newton St.  
Presby. Miss., Harvey St.

**St. Thomas, Charterhouse.**

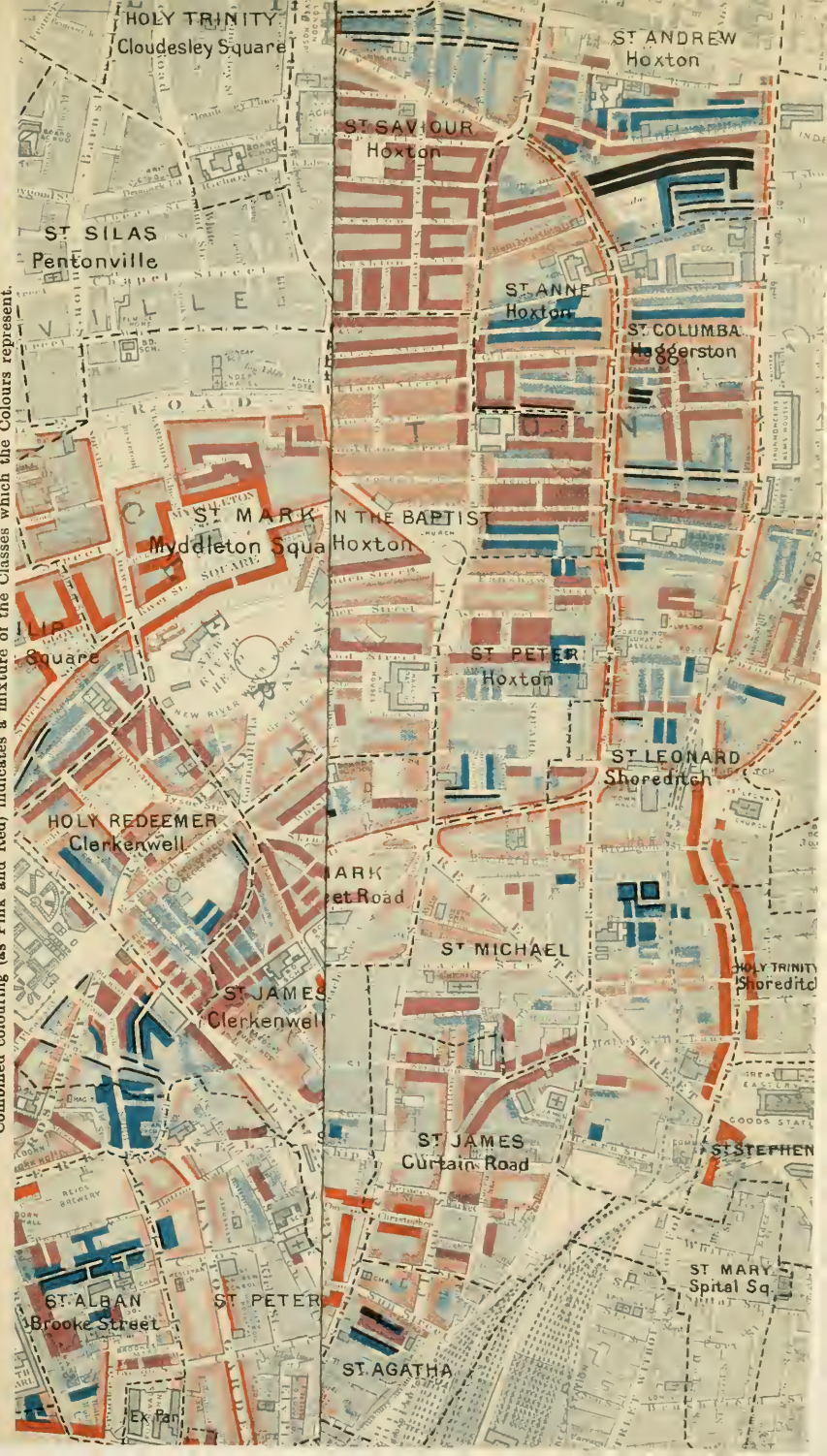
Arthur St. Miss., Gt. Arthur St.

\* Now closed (1902).

The Streets are coloured according to social condition of inhabitants as under:-

- Lowest Class
- Very Poor
- Moderate Poverty
- Very Poverty & Comfort (Mixed)
- Poverty & Comfort
- Fairly Comfortable
- Well-to-do
- Wealthy

Combined colouring (as Pink and Red) indicates a mixture of the Classes which the Colours represent.



Map J.—EAST CENTRAL LONDON (1800).

The Streets are coloured according to social conditions of inhabitants as under—  
Very Poor  
Moderate  
Porety & Comfort (mixed)  
Fairly Comfortable  
Well-to-do  
Wealthy

Very Poor

Moderate

Porety & Comfort (mixed)

Fairly Comfortable

Well-to-do

Wealthy

Combined colouring (see Part and Part) indicates a mixture of the Classes which the Colours represent.





## CHAPTER IV

### WEST CENTRAL LONDON

THIS district will be most conveniently treated in three parts : (1) that which lies immediately to the west of Gray's Inn Road ; (2) that which lies south of Oxford Street and Holborn, eastward from Regent Street to the City boundary ; and (3) that lying to the north of the same line from Russell Square to Langham Place.

#### § 1

##### WEST OF GRAY'S INN ROAD

The part which lies to the west of Gray's Inn Road differs little from that which lies to the east, except that there are in it two or three vicious spots near the Euston Road ; the residue of a generally much worse state of things. For here sweeping changes have recently been made by the clearance of bad property ; but with the usual result that while part of the old residents have left, others cling to the neighbourhood, and, by moving, have blackened some of the adjoining streets.

In this district we have to deal with ' a population of

all sorts crowded together.' On the whole, we may add of the less well-to-do quarters that the people are 'neither disreputable nor criminal,' 'poor folk, but not bad; patient and long-suffering.' In one part the people are 'principally occupied as carmen and labourers,' in another part, where perhaps one-third are Italians, the English are 'cab-washers and stable-helps, some of these being loafers, who trust to the earnings of their wives who work as office cleaners and charwomen.' In a third parish the industrial characteristic mentioned is that of 'home work in the rookeries.' There is, throughout the whole district, a good deal of poverty, and such improvement as is reported springs from the demolition of the black spots and the dispersal of their inhabitants. Thus, although there may be less poverty, 'what remains is worse.' The crowding is still reported as terrible: 'Four, five, six and seven families in one house, mainly living each in one room; parents and grown up children together;' 'Five to ten families in eight to ten rooms;' the people 'always ill as a result of overcrowding;' 'Back streets very dirty;' 'Children, ragged and pale, playing in mess heaps'—thus runs our evidence. The rents are very high. Sanitation is said to have been improved.

The parishes included here are those of Holy Cross, St. George the Martyr, Holy Trinity, and St. John the Evangelist, Red Lion Square, with part of Christ Church, the last-mentioned being a chapel-of-ease of St. George's, Bloomsbury.

In the first of these parishes (Holy Cross) the work has consisted in the gradual building up of a High Church organization. Church and parish hall have been erected, club and schools hired, and a small but faithful congregation has been gathered together, consisting mainly of parishioners, who are also communicants. It is claimed that the Church is popular also among those who do not attend its services.



STATISTICS bearing on the AREA INCLUDED IN SKETCH MAP NO. 8. Described in Chapter IV. (Vol. II.).

CENSUS STATISTICS.

Showing Increase or Decrease of Population.

POPULATION IN		Decrease per Cent.	
1881.	1891.	1881-1891.	1891-1901.
246,087	229,363	6·8 %	9·7 %

Density of Population.

1901.		Age and Sex in 1891.	
PERSONS PER ACRE.	130·0	Age.	Females. Together.
INHABITED HOUSES.	22,245	Under 5 years	10,486
		5 & under 15 yrs	18,662
		20 "	11,920
		25 "	13,240
		35 "	21,480
		45 "	15,798
		55 "	11,597
		65 "	7,078
		65 and over	3,911
PERSONS PER HOUSE.	10·3	Totals ...	118,726
NUMBER OF ACRES.	1,579		229,363

NOTE.—The Sketch Map includes the Registration areas of the STRAND, ST. MARTIN'S-IN-THE-FIELDS, ST. JAMES'S, WESTMINSTER, ST. AXNE'S, SOHO, ST. GILES and ST. GEORGE'S, BLOOMSBURY, ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR, part of GRAY'S INN LANE, TOTTENHAM COURT and ALL SOULS', MARYLEBONE. During the decade 1891-1901, St. George the Martyr, St. Andrew Eastern and Saffron Hill were combined to form another district—Holborn—and Cavendish Square has been added to All Souls'. In the figures given these areas are consequently included as well as the whole of Gray's Inn Lane. For details of the Special Family Enumeration see Appendix.

SPECIAL ENUMERATION FOR THIS INQUIRY (1891).

Sex, Birthplace and Industrial Status of Heads of Families.

SEX.	BIRTHPLACE.		INDUSTRIAL STATUS.		TOTAL HEADS.		
	Male.	Female.	Out of London.	Employers		Employees	Neither.
40,935 77 %	12,543 23 %	24,919 47 %	28,559 53 %	6,510 12 %	35,515 66 %	11,453 22 %	53,478 100 %

Constitution of Families.

HEADS.	Others Occupied.	Unoccupied.	Servants.	TOTAL IN FAMILIES.
53,478 (1·0)	54,060 (1·01)	87,737 (1·64)	11,724 (·22)	206,999 (3·87)

SOCIAL CLASSIFICATION according to Rooms Occupied or Servants Kept.

PERSONS.	PER CENT.	
	PERCENT.	PER CENT.
4 or more persons to a room	22,222	9·7
3 & under 4	25,817	11·2
2 & " 3	45,926	20·2
1 & " 2	44,106	19·2
Less than 1 person to a room	7,103	3·1
Occupying more than 4 rooms	24,605	10·7
4 or more persons to 1 servant	10,350	4·5
Less than 4 persons to 1 servant & 4 to 7 persons to 2 servants	7,622	3·3
All others with 2 or more servants	7,518	3·3
Servants in families	11,724	5·1
Inmates of Institutions (including servants)	22,364	9·7
Total	229,363	100
Living in Poverty (as estimated in 1886)		·30 %
" in Comfort		·70 %

At any rate it has raised and carried firmly aloft the flag of religion. But High Church ways are not by any means approved by all. The London City missionaries, for instance, who have always a strong Evangelical bent, regard them with inveterate distrust. The people reached by the missionaries are in the ordinary course encouraged to take the communion at some neighbouring church, but in this neighbourhood, we are told, 'there is no church (of the Establishment) to which they could rightly go ; the Church of England is in so sad a state, little better than Roman Catholic ;' so the mission people perforce betake themselves to the Lord's table at one of the Baptist chapels.

Of strained relations between the City Missionaries and the Church we have heard a great deal. Difficulties sometimes occur when they are supposed to co-operate entirely ; when the ritual is by no means extreme, and even when it is Evangelical. As a body, indeed, the missionaries throughout London are apt to be considered as working less for the Church than for the Nonconformist bodies or for their own mission centre, if they have one. It is characteristic that the emissaries of the High Church (regarded as competing for the souls of the people) are felt by our missionary to take a mean advantage when, in visiting, they do not sedulously turn the conversation into spiritual channels. 'They talk of trade or the weather, but get no nearer to the concerns of religion than an invitation to church ;' not so the City missionary, whose business it is, however carefully he may approach the subject, never to leave without some reference to the soul's welfare, and to be ever on the watch for any chance to turn the conversation in this direction.

The use of money, too, is animadverted on. The Church is charged with winning by the power of the purse. As to the results of his own work the mis-

sionary only claims very modestly that he succeeds 'in getting hold of one here and there.'

This corner of London, including a portion of the parish of St. Pancras, is cursed by the street-walking form of prostitution, for which many of the small hotels in the neighbourhood of the railway termini offer facilities. The lowest of these women used to live in the vile quarter off Cromer Street, which has now given way to model buildings, and some still live near, but women come here from all parts. Rescue work is undertaken, and a door of escape thus kept open for those who will avail themselves of it, but it is found that the only hopeful cases are those who have but recently adopted the life. The women who ply their trade in this neighbourhood are more English than foreign, of a lower class, and, as a rule, of greater age than those who are found round about Piccadilly Circus. The local population is not much affected.

In the next parish to the South we find the work of the Church of England (in Regent Square) overshadowed by that of the Presbyterians, who have a large church and congregation and a very numerous body of voluntary workers. The contrast is great. At the church there are, indeed, endless services, but a mere handful of people attend them, and everything done is on an extremely small scale. 'There are more communicants at Easter than attendance at other times.' About the great gathering of Presbyterians there is, of course, nothing local or parochial. Most of the congregation live at some little distance, and there is among them a large element of young people, mostly Scotch, from whom are drawn the 120 Sunday school teachers and the active mission band upon whom the outside energies of the church depend. There is a mission-hall, and the neighbouring Board schools are hired on Sunday; but this provision has proved inadequate for the work, and some property

adjoining the church has been recently bought with the intention of erecting two additional halls and a number of class-rooms.

Thus (to quote their own words), is built up the 'mission work upon which the church life so much depends.' It is solely through these agencies that the local people are touched. There is a medical mission, and much visitation is done and charitable relief given. The income of this church exceeds £3000, and whatever may be the measure of success as regards the poor, the religious needs of its own people are well provided for.

The other parish churches in this district, down as far as Holborn, present no special features except perhaps that of St. John the Evangelist, where high ritual, with beautiful music and a beautiful church, have always brought together large congregations; now drawn chiefly from Bloomsbury. The people of the locality are of a rather low and very poor class, and for them a great deal is done after the usual fashion and with about the ordinary modicum of effect.

One of the neighbouring clergy, speaking of his own parishioners, says: 'They are all elaborately visited from house to house and room to room, by the curates and visitors, and I myself go round when I can to give the machine a push here and a push there. The people bear the visits of the clergy with the greatest fortitude, but whether they like them or no, I am not certain.' This visiting is described as 'nominally spiritual': in any case the clergy never themselves give relief, but they keep their eyes open and if necessary send the sanitary inspector, or the relieving officer, or the School Board visitor, or their own mission woman, with relief in their wake, and though they never give without 'grumbling,' the people know they will be listened to. He has tried to institute payment by the women for his mothers' meeting treat,

but on this plan few come, and, though he detests the whole system of competition by such means, he likes the women to have their outing. 'When a woman comes to you and says she has not heard the cuckoo for twenty-five years it is worth the shilling or so it costs to take her : you must put some light into these people's lives ; and if they can't afford to pay, what can you do but pay for them ?' By this witness a very kindly view is taken of the people, and it is claimed that, due allowance being made for the evil conditions under which they live, they are morally at a higher level than the rich. The women, especially, he praised for their patience and longsuffering ; ' the wonder,' he said, ' is not that one here and there gives the whole thing up as a bad job and takes to drink, but that more do not do so.'

Nonconformity is here represented by the Baptists at John Street Chapel (formerly the scene of Baptist Noel's work). They provide for the religious wants of a considerable middle-class congregation, and attempt to reach ' the people ' by open-air meetings, and the outcast migratory class by lodging-house services. The results are, as usual, unsatisfactory. At Kingsgate Street, also, the Baptists had, at the time of our inquiry, a respectable, but small working-class congregation, and sought by ' Christian social ' services, with free teas—to which the poor gladly come—and by free concerts and children's treats, to extend their influence to the class below. This church has now been pulled down in connection with the widening of Southampton Row, and, as a consequence of this alteration, a larger piece of land has been secured, upon which, in addition to a new chapel, a church-house is being built to serve the same purpose for the Baptists that the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street does for the Congregationalists.

In this district are the Bessbrook Homes for men,



which are concerned mainly with the reclamation of the lost characters of the streets—sandwichmen, &c. The work is conducted on a basis of religion and temperance, and appears to be fairly successful. Drink is the chief evil to be combatted.

## § 2

### SOUTH OF OXFORD STREET AND HOLBORN, EAST OF REGENT STREET

In a previous volume\* I gave a very minute description of the black streets to the west of Lincoln's Inn Fields. They, like the dark blue portion of Bethnal Green, have since been to a great extent cleared away; and many of their inhabitants have removed to Fulham and Battersea and elsewhere. The transition is still in active progress. Macklin Street, rebuilt, is now respectably occupied, except as regards two common lodging-houses which remain; and the same is true of Shelton Street and of most of Parker Street; but the improvement in this group of streets has been accompanied by deterioration in some of those that adjoin. 'Many thieves,' say the police. 'Faces of criminal type,' say our notes, children dirty and sore eyed, but fairly booted and looking not ill-fed, and (when seen) were dancing to the strains of an organ in one of the dirty, messy, bread-littered courts.

There is no change in Nottingham Court or in Short's Gardens. Bad and rough before, they still show no improvement. Neal Street has grown worse, and generally speaking, there is in these places a noticeable absence of happiness as well as comfort in life.

\* First Series: Poverty. Vol. II., pp. 46-81.

Women, with hardened, furtive expression, are seen; children (even though they may dance) looking old and pale; small dark rooms; unmade beds; eatables deposited on the chairs, and all the various signs of dirty and untidy homes. But yet in the roughest streets flower-boxes were arranged in the windows.

So, too, in the neighbourhood of Clare Market there have been large clearances, and others are impending. The courts and back streets that remain are full of a poor rough class of labourers, market porters, costermongers and flower girls. Many are Roman Catholics of Irish nationality, born and bred in the neighbourhood. 'Violent and drunken, but not criminal,' is the police opinion of them. The priest, however, says his people are not so savage as is made out; that they are very kind to each other, and in this respect set an example to their betters. 'The poor give to the poor.' 'Neighbours nurse one another.'

The population in such streets consists largely of men and women without regular or even legitimate occupation; those who hang on to the skirts of civilization and pick up a living as they can; adepts, many of them, at availing themselves of the opportunities of free meals which churches and missions provide. The Roman Catholics amongst them readily accept such Protestant bounties as are offered.

St. Giles's is the actual location of the principal missions here, but their efforts, which range over the whole West Central district and even beyond it, are specially concentrated on the Drury Lane neighbourhood. The greatest of these is the St. Giles's Christian Mission, of which Mr. Wheatley is now the responsible manager. It is a huge organization, with an income from subscriptions and donations of about £16,000 a year. The efforts of this Society fall into two main divisions, the one consisting of ordinary mission work

in the area which lies between St. Giles's and the Strand, whilst the other is of a special character carried on amongst discharged prisoners. This latter is very remarkable, and from being a mere branch of the work has assumed such proportions as gradually to overshadow all the rest. There is a separate subscription list, and a separate balance sheet, but as the bulk of the income still comes to the parent mission, a transfer from its funds is made to meet the growing needs of the prison work, upon which about £9000 in all is spent. Mr. Wheatley's institution is fully recognised by the prison authorities, and every facility given to enable him to get hold of the discharged culprits. Of this work, which is shared by the Salvation Army, the Church Army, and various other societies, some account will be given later; but at present I am only concerned with the operations of the mission proper. It includes a complete church organization with over seven hundred members, from whom the large body of voluntary mission workers is drawn. The chapel in Little Wild Street is an active centre of evangelistic preaching where those who attend may perhaps, some of them, be poor, though they do not look it. More scantily-attended services take place at four separate mission centres, and altogether, including those at the boys' homes and at the prison gates and other places, it is claimed that over four thousand Gospel services are held in each year. The charitable relief given is on an equally wholesale scale. 'The winter months bring their own peculiar and pressing demands upon our resources. It is then that work is scarce, and the cry of the poor is loudest. We cannot let that cry go unheeded. Feed the hungry and supply warmth to the cold and wretched we must. We do not administer relief indiscriminately; on the other hand, we do not administer it grudgingly or when it is too late. We investigate, and then we help.'

Such is the language in which the public is appealed to for funds.

A good deal is spent. Relief by tickets and money gifts to the local poor amount to nearly £1300 in the year's accounts. The neighbouring religious bodies, whatever may be their own sins in the same direction, complain that the action of the mission is far from judicious, and tends to the encouragement of a very low class, and to the pauperization of the people. It is said that in order to make appeals for money successful, existing evils are greatly exaggerated, and an unnecessarily bad name given to the neighbourhood; that the blackest spots are depicted and the most sensational incidents recorded, it being implied, if not asserted, by the language used, that such terrible scenes are not at all unusual; that the great changes of recent years are ignored; and that an old string is harped upon, and statements repeated again and again which, if they ever were true, are true no longer. In this I only report what is freely said by others who are no less keen to serve the poor. The fact is that, in parts of this district, things were once almost indescribably bad, and that they are still bad enough to justify the strongest possible appeals to the public, and almost any expenditure of money, if by such expenditure the evils could be cured. Unfortunately neither the money expended under missionary guidance such as this, nor the preaching of the Gospel, by which it is accompanied, appear to have any effect whatever in raising the character of the people. At the very best the result is to win here and there an individual to a better life, but in the main the efforts are wasted, and worse than wasted. There are large Sunday schools connected with this mission.

A mission of another character altogether is the one named after the Inns of Court. It is really an embryo

Settlement rather than a mission; its head is called warden, and is a churchman in orders, but the workers and supporters are all barristers. Of the workers some live in the Temple, and are thus practically residents, though none have as yet taken up their quarters at the mission itself. It is a quite recent undertaking and the start was made upon club work, while educational developments, even to the extent of founding a working-class polytechnic, are dreamed of. Religious work is partly held in suspense. It is recognised that it can only grow as the members of the club and institute will receive it; but the final aim of all is to teach how practical a thing Christianity is and how it should and does influence conduct.

Off the Strand, such courts as remain are scheduled for destruction, and by and by their inhabitants will be dispersed. Meanwhile they are over visited and over relieved, but 'spiritually untouched.'

The representatives of the Church of England hereabouts do not, as a whole, display any notable activity, but there are exceptions. The two parishes lying to the east of Drury Lane are analogous in population, and are both vigorously worked; but whilst in Holy Trinity everything proceeds on very cautious lines, a quite different policy is adopted in St. Clement Danes. For lavish doings with the children, no one quite equals the rector of this latter parish. Amongst other things, it is his delight that they should come to the church to be given clothes and cake. The sale and pawning by the parents of the 'useful garments' given has led the rector to have them marked with his own name and that of the church, so as to diminish or destroy their market value. That they would be proportionately degrading to wear does not seem to have occurred to him.

Passing westward we come to St. Martin's, which

though no longer 'in the Fields,' includes in its parish more grass than any other so near to the centre of London, and has among its parishioners all grades of society, from the King to the beggar, and every kind of home from Buckingham Palace to the slums of Bedfordbury. The rector says he has seen a Cabinet Minister and a crossing sweeper kneel side by side at the communion service. Nowhere in London is the church more catholic in its social position, but while it draws freely upon the purses of the rich in order to assist the poor, it is neither the poor nor the rich amongst its parishioners who fill the church, but rather the passer-by in the street, to whom the magnificence of its situation and its glorious resounding chimes cannot but appeal. Thus it is largely a congregation of strangers; probably visitors to London, staying in the great hotels that surround Trafalgar Square. The ritual is old fashioned and Evangelical in character.

It is claimed that a large number of the poorer parishioners are occasional worshippers on Sunday evening; but the services in the mission church in Bedfordbury have always been a failure. 'Those who will go anywhere go to church.' The system of visiting in the interest of church and school attendance, mothers' meetings, &c., seems to be carried to an extreme point of pertinacity, but by far the most important work lies in the schools. In this parish, and indeed in the whole of the district, there are comparatively few Board schools. The Church schools educate nearly all the children; and the parents (it is claimed), however irregular in their own attendance at church, value the sympathetic interest of the clergy and the teachers as well as the greater prominence given to moral and religious training in the schools. Constant contact with the children is maintained by daily catechising in church, and two-thirds of those

who attend the day schools come also to the Sunday school. Altogether St. Martin's presents a solid and fairly successful attempt to find a useful place for the Church in the life of a parish occupied by all classes. The difficulties it has to face are not so much those of congested poverty or a low standard of living, as those created by the rushing stream of pleasure seeking and money spending; and by the moral results of an atmosphere of excitement. Many of the parishioners find their living in the theatres and music-halls, the children act in the pantomimes, and all have a tendency to become stage-struck; while the constant sight of flaunting vice, though said to be deterrent rather than attractive, may tend to lower the moral tone.

It is in recognition of these difficulties that we find, more or less under the wing of this church, such institutions as 'The Wantage Club,' intended to meet the needs of the young women employed in clubs and hotels for some place to go to in their hours of recreation, and the 'Rehearsal Club,' which serves the same purpose for girls engaged in the ballet or chorus at the music-halls and theatres. These are not in any degree religious organizations. Indeed, at the Rehearsal Club any reference to religion is in practice tabooed.

Rescue work is undertaken by the Charing Cross Rescue and Vigilance Association, the sphere of which extends to a larger area than St. Martin's parish. It holds its meetings in St. Martin's Town Hall, and carries on its work under great difficulties in a district where 'there are drinking shops at every corner, and where brothels open almost as fast as they are closed.' Over this trouble St. Martin's joins hands with St. James's, where Bishop Barry made it a leading part of his work; special midnight services, attended chiefly by men, having been held to bear public witness against the sin and vice which run riot in the neighbourhood.

There is in St. James's parish a larger proportion of working-class people than is adequately shown by the colouring of our map. Packed away in small apartments and single rooms near Golden Square, and in the yards and mews behind business premises or in rear of the houses of the rich, they suffer under very high rents, and since they depend on the seasonal trades there is at times much poverty among them in spite of nominally high wages. They seldom come to church and are not easily reached in any way. The services of the church are well attended by the wealthier classes and strangers, but not much that can be called congregational or parochial is attempted.

We now pass to a string of parishes which are the very heart of West Central London—St. Mary, St. Anne, St. Luke, St. John the Baptist, St. Thomas, St. Peter, and St. Giles (though of this more than half lies north of New Oxford Street). As regards their congregations, parish boundaries do not exist, and as regards work among the poor these boundaries are as a matter of course broken into and overlapped and ignored by the numerous missionary enterprises of which this district, together with Drury Lane and the Strand, is the scene. Between these missions and the churches, as I have already hinted, rather painful jealousies exist. From the point of view of the missions, the churches, or a number of them, are asleep, and such as are awake 'cannot be recommended'; while from the point of view of the churches, especially that of the most active, the missions have ill-judged methods and use exaggerated language. We have seen the same thing in some degree elsewhere, but nowhere is the clash between rival doctors so marked as it is here.

Very full accounts of this district have been given historically in Mr. Cardwell's *Two Centuries of Soho* and



in Mr. Sherwell's remarkable book, *West London*. It is, indeed, a strange outlandish population with which the churches and missions attempt to deal, and its social diseases are varied and numerous. Not only have we the criminal and outcast, the utterly vicious and the hopelessly drunken, the veriest refuse of London life, together with a low class of casual labour; not only have we the harlot and those who facilitate and live upon her trade; not only the unwholesome conditions of theatrical employment and the occupations which depend on the London season; but here are gathered together every kind and description of foreigner, including a rapidly increasing colony of Jews, so that Central London as a whole is in some ways as completely cosmopolitan as it is in others curiously insular and self-contained. We hear of instances in which five languages are spoken in one house, but as a rule the people of each nationality seem to select some particular street or streets as their own.

At St. Giles's there is only a small congregation, but those who come are almost all communicants, and great efforts are made by the Church through mission work to find a place for itself in the lives of the people, and large day as well as Sunday schools are conducted. At St. Anne's, again, there are day and Sunday schools, and much work is done in connection with thrift, including a collecting bank, a slate club, and a large self-help society. This church is famed for its music and draws a large congregation from a wide area, with but a very small contingent from its own parishioners, among whom the spiritual work (except as regards the children) is admitted to be a complete failure. No jealousy is felt of what others may be able to do in this direction, but fear is expressed as to the pauperizing influence of some of their methods. The people are not generally poor; including the Jews, fully half are foreigners. The vicar of St. Luke's made

no secret of his preference for social over religious methods. For the rest—some of whom we have seen and some not—all are in varying degree High Church, all proud of their services, and all able to collect together a small congregation, which in one case (St. John the Baptist, Great Marlborough Street) is said to be of the working class ; and all are endeavouring by means of Sunday schools and mothers' meetings, guilds, and classes, and clubs, to do their duty by the people, in the vain hope that in return the people will do their duty by religion. The largest congregation is found at St. Thomas's, Regent Street. Not one of all these churches can, I fear, be 'recommended' from the London City Missionary's point of view.

There are in this district several 'special' churches ; including the Swiss Chapel, Endell Street—the only one of its kind in London ; the French Protestant Church, Soho ; and the Welsh Presbyterian Church in Charing Cross Road, lately built at the cost of £11,000, and already too small for its growing community, being the leading place of worship of the Welsh in the Metropolis. This last church has many young members, and caters for their social as well as religious needs. The mission work it undertakes lies not here, but in Kentish Town and Pimlico. So, too, the Scottish National Church has its religious centre in Russell Street, Covent Garden, to which people come from all parts of London. The young people in this case undertake a share of the missionary work of the neighbourhood. In St. Alban's Place is a synagogue for the rapidly growing Jewish population, while in Swallow Street assembles the only 'Theistic' church that London supports.

The French Catholics also have a church in Leicester Place, which concerns itself with the whole of their community in London, and there are three other

Roman Catholic churches, all of which have interesting personal or historical associations. That in Sardinia Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, was at one time in the occupation of the Franciscans, at another acting as the chapel of the Sardinian Embassy. It now serves a large and very poor Catholic population, chiefly Irish. Some of these have been displaced by demolitions, but it is estimated that three thousand still remain, and that twelve hundred to fifteen hundred attend the various masses on Sunday morning. Another, the Roman Catholic church in Warwick Street, Golden Square, was once the chapel of the Bavarian Embassy, and forty years ago was the centre of Catholic life in London. Later, being supplanted in the Catholic world by the Church of the Jesuits in Farm Street, it fell into disuse and disrepair, and, though nominally responsible for a great district, is still practically a church without a congregation, and, following the example set by so many of ours, has sought, with the aid of the Catholic Social Union, to eke out its directly religious work by mothers' meetings and a girls' club, open four nights a week, for dancing and singing and cookery classes.

St. Patrick's, Soho, takes a more definite place. It, too, serves a large district containing a scattered Roman Catholic population rather difficult to deal with. Many of the poor Irish have left, others are going. The new comers, if Catholic, are mostly foreigners, and if they attend Mass at all would probably go to their own special national churches. There is, however, a good musical service, and the church is often full. The priest seems to be on the best of terms both with the clergy of the Church of England and with the great Wesleyan Mission, to the work of which we shall shortly come.

Nonconformist churches of the ordinary type are not much in evidence here, Bloomsbury Chapel in

Shaftesbury Avenue being the only one of any importance. It is an imposing building, and draws a considerable congregation of middle-class people, including many visitors. Otherwise the numbers are largely made up of young people from business houses (*i.e.*, shops) by whom and for whose sake a mutual improvement society and parliamentary debating club are maintained, as well as clubs for tennis, cricket and swimming in Summer. Work among the poor is carried on at Bloomsbury Hall, Meard Street, under the name of the Soho and St. Giles's Mission, and is managed by a very capable deaconess who has worked in East London for both the Congregationalists and the Wesleyans. She compares Soho and Drury Lane unfavourably with Haggerston and Bethnal Green, especially as regards the housing of the people. At her mothers' meetings there are about three hundred women, and hardly any of these, she says, have homes with more than one room. If families have to change their quarters, their children, or some of them, are hidden away. 'Putting them in the churchyard,' is the rather grim phrase used; meaning merely that these superfluous children are housed by neighbours for awhile, till, without attracting the new landlord's notice, they can be 'sneaked into the new home.'

This deaconess complains that the people lack energy as compared to the East End folk, and need stirring up again and again. More is done for them in the way of charitable relief than she has ever known elsewhere.

It is noteworthy that of the people in the immediate neighbourhood very few come to the religious services at the hall, and in tracing to their homes such as do attend, the deaconess is taken over a wide area, extending to the courts off the Strand. We have here a glimpse, from another point of view, of the

competition so often complained of; and a rather hopeless picture of work amongst the poor.

Lastly, we come to the great enterprise of the Wesleyans. Into the midst of this population and this condition of things, with which neither old-fashioned parish organization, nor High Church enthusiasm, nor missionary zeal, seemed able successfully to deal, the Wesleyans plunged with even greater energy and enthusiasm. Not the least remarkable feature of the story I have to tell is that their success should have been attained with so little jealousy being felt on the part either of the Church or of other missions. This enterprise, which extends also North, South and East, has its centre in the West London Mission. Its expansion has been astonishing, and its success, at least in West London, triumphant and wonderful. As a whole it presents perhaps the most characteristic social and religious movement in London of the last decade. Others equally great and with more or less similar aims have preceded it, and are still maintained in full force, indicating a great wave of human effort of which it is the latest crest.

There was the Evangelical impulse associated with the name of Lord Shaftesbury, and represented by the Ragged School Union, and by 'Mildmay', and other work of the same kind; while not in any way less remarkable has been the energizing religious impulse of the High Church, which has been a distinct and powerful spiritual movement breathing much-needed life into the Church of England. With both of these, the one not more than the other, the work has been built up, and is still sustained, by personal devotion and saintly lives, in undiminished force. Both movements rely for their finances mainly on prayer, and in both cases it can surely be claimed that their prayers have been answered. Another most

extraordinary development has been that of the great begging missions, which put their faith in advertising, and find that faith also justified. They, too, are supported by the sacrifices of devoted lives, and can claim that 'God has greatly blessed them.' Then there are the institutions which provide for outcast or stranded children (of which Dr. Barnardo's is the most important, but by no means the only example) which, while requiring devoted service, and using every device of begging by public appeal to obtain the huge incomes they administer, do, most of all, base their success, and their claim to public favour, and to God's blessing, on sound and prudent business management. There has also been the movement in the direction of 'settlements,' which, in its inception, may be considered to reflect Broad Church views, and which, by whomsoever taken up, represents always the broader side; and somewhat allied to this has been the work of the Polytechnics, which have sprung up on all sides. All these are remarkable efforts, and, when combined, indicate a new recognition of social responsibility and a great awakening of spiritual life. Nor have I mentioned the marvellous progress of the Salvation Army, which, passing beyond the bounds of London, has become national, imperial, and even international in its scope.

It is the peculiarity of this latest development of the Wesleyans that all the methods and aspirations I have referred to are in it reflected and find a place. It, too, leans on the Gospel and its saving power; it, too, has its sisterhoods and, in a sense, its confessional; it, too, has breathed life into neglected churches; it, too, looks to God in prayer. But at the same time it does not reject the most modern methods of advertising; and the utmost care has been taken to place the whole structure on an unquestionable business footing. Moreover, to all this the

Wesleyans have added two distinct methods of their own : the one being an elaborate and greatly extended use of music, which, though always a strong feature in their community, is in these missions carried to a point unexampled before ; the other being the frank admixture of home politics with religion, carried so far as the running of candidates, usually with success, at the local elections.

As their work has developed it has assumed, and indeed it could not but assume, the same general shape, and has adopted very much the same organizations, as do all the other Churches and missions which seek to reach the people, excepting only those of the Church of Rome. Every religious organization throws out its missions ; and Missions, however established, tend, if successful, to grow into Churches. It matters not which part comes first. Whether coming first or last the Church has its characteristic structure, and whether coming first or last the Missions have theirs. Comparing Church with Church their structure is very similar, and comparing Mission with Mission they differ one from another hardly at all.

The effort of the Wesleyans in West London followed that inaugurated in East London, which we have already described, and was itself followed up by the establishment of missions on similar lines in North, Central, and South London. The whole may be rightly regarded as one movement. The recognised impulse was the publication of the *Bitter Cry of Outcast London*, containing a sensational, and perhaps exaggerated, but not untrue picture of the condition of things existing in the poorer districts of London, and of the prevailing 'spiritual destitution.' The impulse thus born (which was in truth the outcome of many conditions and sentiments of the time—social, economic and religious—to which this pamphlet effectively

appealed) was strengthened by the concurrent fact that in the districts from which the middle classes had moved the endowed Nonconformist churches had lost their congregations, and were almost everywhere on the point of extinction. Where these conditions prevailed, the first necessity was to abandon the three-year system usual with the Wesleyan community and turn churches into missions. The next point was to associate work amongst the poor with Church membership, and with appeals to the Wesleyan community at large for financial assistance. What followed has been a development of the relations with the poor, displaying great ingenuity as well as large-heartedness, aimed at assisting them in their manifold needs, at interesting them in the religious services of the Church, and finally at holding such of them as were 'saved' in the bonds of Church membership by the class system common to all Wesleyan communities.

The methods adopted and the work undertaken differ a little according to the neighbourhood. But there is much that is common to all, and what is in common is far the most important part of the work. At each mission centre there are 'Sisters of the People,' who wear a garb and are called by chosen Christian names preceded by the title of 'Sister.' They are trained for the work and kept under strict discipline, and their work is recognised as being of the first importance in every way. It is remarkable that, though of course no vow of celibacy is taken or dreamed of, it is expected that the Sisters will put aside all idea of marriage during their period of active service. They visit the people, nurse the sick, teach the children, and manage the institutions, having the assistance of a large number of volunteers. It is recognised that the most pressing present need is a brotherhood to match. Failing this, the male side does what it can. There are ministers and assistant



ministers and evangelists, secretaries and business managers. There are musical directors, organists and choirmasters, and a great body of trained musicians. Doctors and dispensers lend their services, and at each centre a lawyer is found who is ready to attend one evening in each week to advise those in difficulty on points of law.

In addition to the great preaching centre at St. James's Hall, soon to be replaced by a cathedral at Westminster, the West London Mission makes use of three halls in different parts of the district where services are regularly conducted. At each we find the same series of efforts to reach and touch and teach and help. There are mothers' meetings and Sunday schools; the 'people's drawing-room' and children's play hour; a cripples' guild of 'Poor brave things'; thrift societies and temperance work, servants' registry and labour bureau; boys' clubs and girls' clubs—all much the same as are to be found with every actively worked religious organization, but more than usually filled with fervour and so welded together as to form the greatest mission church in London.

The impulse comes from St. James's Hall. Many of my readers may have attended a service there. All know the hall and its situation—with entrances both from Regent Street and Piccadilly. The doors are open long before the hours at which the services begin, and twice, if not three times, on Sunday the hall is filled to its full capacity. On each occasion there is a musical prelude for at least half an hour. In the evening, over-flow meetings are held in the smaller hall, and many hundreds are turned away. The greatest order prevails.

The different services have each a specific character. In the morning the object is the 'edification of the Church,' and the maintenance of the Christian life

among those already living under its sway. The afternoon services are devoted to social and political applications of religion ; and in the evening 'the Gospel of Salvation is broadly preached with the direct aim of winning souls.' This is tested by publicly avowed decisions, for the harvesting of which provision is made in the 'inquiry rooms,' which are said never yet to have been empty after a service on Sunday night.

It is an atmosphere of high pressure. If we ask whether it will continue, we may remember that it has been maintained for more than ten years, and has even been communicated to other similar efforts. Thus it does not seem to be the outcome of any temporary excitement or to depend on the personality of the remarkable man who conducts the work, but rather to be due to the invocation of permanent religious feelings, and to the apt use of social forces which are not likely to fail any more than are the social evils it is sought to counteract. Yet with this, as with other religious efforts in London, there is a certain measure of delusion which is not without danger. The work does not in fact fill the *rôle* which it claims to fill ; does not accomplish that which it set out to do. Read the reports. They paint a picture of poverty and misery ; of depravity and sin. In its midst and to deal with it the mission church is planted ; but the crowds who fill St. James's Hall come to no great extent from those residing in the neighbourhood. Some of the young men and women employed in the great shops may be attracted, but the poor are not seen there, nor the depraved, nor those who have been lifted out of those conditions. The bulk of those who come find in the service an agreeable Sunday pastime, a pleasant change from attendance at less lively places of worship. The influence of this pulpit may be of

very great importance, but it does very little for the spiritual destitution of West Central London. It raises a flag—it rouses public opinion and it enlists workers as well as sympathisers—it stimulates missionary zeal. All this is excellent, but bears much the same relation to the actual work projected as a teachers' guild bears to elementary education.

Those, in especial, who are moved to confess Christ come from all parts of England and even of the Globe.

Thus the scene of operation passes to the local missions which are stimulated and supported by the zeal thus raised. What part do they play in the lives of the people? What part do the people take in the life of these mission churches? I have mentioned the social work of which each mission is the centre, for which the funds as well as many of the workers come from the central organization. The scope of the work is singularly complete, ranging from the *crèche* for the infant to the 'home of peace' for the dying. In addition, the neighbouring children are taught in Sunday schools; and the Sisters visit the people, become almoners for the relief of distress, and gather the mothers together. But those who attend the Gospel services are of better class, and the social work, be it good or bad in itself, bears but little relation to the spread of that Gospel with the preaching of which it is supposed to be so absolutely connected. The influence of the Gospel is over those who *work*, and only to a very small extent over those for whom they work. The workers, whose lives the Gospel really reaches, are mostly of an altogether different class from those they serve. Those among them who have been raised from poverty or depravity are exceptional characters. In these things the work of this mission does not greatly differ from that of others.

As to the social work on its own merits all

observers agree that its value has been progressive. It has been inspired by a broad, intelligent, and teachable spirit. The reports issued are honestly written and wholesome to read; and such exaggeration as occurs is hardly more than is necessary to the enforcement of any truth.

### § 3

#### RUSSELL SQUARE TO LANGHAM PLACE

This section leads us from the old to the new region of fashionable life, from the West End of our grandfathers' London to the West End of our own time, which may be said to begin at Portland Place. Though no longer fashionable, the bulk of this district is fairly well-to-do; and the difficulties of the clergy in dealing with it are due, not so much to poverty as to the fact that the population consists largely of residents in furnished apartments and lodging-houses, with a considerable admixture of foreigners. There is also a large working-class element, respectable, but non-churchgoing.

But though the population does not respond readily to parochial treatment, it furnishes ample material for congregations, and doubtless helps to swell the audiences at special or popular services far and near: at St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, at St. Thomas's, Regent Street, or St. James's Hall, at St. Alban's, Holborn, or the City Temple; as well as within its own circle at St. Pancras, or at St. George's, Bloomsbury, at All Saints', Margaret Street, or St. Andrew's, Wells Street. Everywhere and anywhere a remarkable service or a remarkable man suffices to attract large crowds morning and evening, Sunday after Sunday;

and in these audiences, though the middle class and the female sex prevail, practically the whole population is represented.

Some difficulty is experienced by the churches in securing parish workers. One of the incumbents complains that the members of his congregation seem to think that their religious duties are adequately performed if they attend church on Sunday. This is the reverse of what we have seen in other parts where the workers are the entire congregation. It may be that it is just those earnest spirits who man the missions all over London, that are lacking here, having been carried away by their enthusiasm for the cause of religion or the service of the poor, to regions where they feel the need to be greater. The cream, perhaps, has been taken and only the skimmed milk left. The impenetrability of non-churchgoing or casual churchgoing respectability doubtless makes the work near home discouraging.

If we include St. Pancras there are nine parish churches in the area with which we are dealing. Of these St. George's, Bloomsbury, though it shares in the difficulties as to workers, is very active, and has successful institutions for men and boys. Its social agencies, which are vigorously and efficiently managed, are open to all parishioners, irrespective of creed or attendance at church or Bible-class; but, in fact, they feed both, and the Sunday evening congregation contains, we are told, many of the poorer inhabitants. Dogmatic teaching is avoided at the day schools. This church is an example of reasonable success on Broad Church lines. Both the preaching and the music are good. At Christ Church, Woburn Square, which serves part of this same parish, including the poor district east of Woburn Place, the service is moderately High, and attracts those who find that at the mother church not sufficiently ornate. The congregations at

both churches consist mainly of the well-to-do. For the poor there is a mission, the services at which they do not attend, but in other ways a great deal is done for them.

At St. Pancras, where also the ritual is rather High, a still larger congregation gathers, especially on Sunday evening, and the week-day and Sunday schools are attended by twelve hundred children, who come largely from the poor parts of the parish, both north and south of Euston Road. For the wants of those districts there are two mission halls; which, though they gather in no new worshippers, serve as usual as centres of social work. Friendly relations are, in general, well-established, and, in fact, as the vicar good humouredly expressed it, 'Among people who don't come to it the church is extraordinarily popular.' There is a large and successful 'self help' society which is not parochial. Club work for men and boys has failed, and the task is now being taken up by the Passmore Edwards Settlement.

St. Saviour's, Fitzroy Square, can claim a working-class congregation, and does a great deal for them. If one thing fails, another is started. Money is freely spent. The church is empty on Sunday morning, but in the evening is fairly attended. There are usually as many as three hundred coins (mostly copper) in the offertory. The people come and go; it is a shifting as well as a poor congregation; but there are two hundred communicants. Thus this church, too, has its measure of success. Like St. Pancras, the parish extends to the north of the Euston Road, and it is there that the poorest and worst part lies; but, unlike St. Pancras, it contains no well-to-do quarter. In the part lying south of Euston Road there has been a steady decay for many years. There are now no middle-class people left, and only a diminishing proportion of the upper working class. These streets

tend to become uniformly poor and the crowding in them is excessive. We have here and further to the South, an inferior Soho in the making: Jews, foreigners, prostitutes, and all.

At All Souls', Langham Place, the service is strictly Evangelical, just as at All Saints', Margaret Street, it is the reverse. At All Souls' the congregation is mainly parochial; at All Saints' there is practically no parish. The church without a parish has the larger congregation. Finally, at St. Andrew's, Wells Street, extremes are shunned, and a large and wealthy congregation, coming from a wide area, enjoy a beautiful musical service. As fashionable churches these three are all successful in their way, and by all of them the poor are 'helped' a good deal. It is even suggested that in the poor streets rents are thereby affected, although to raise these, other and more potent causes are at work.

In this district the Nonconformists are not strong. The Wesleyans are represented by a branch of the West London Mission. The Congregationalists have recently opened a large new church in Tottenham Court Road, being the third in succession on the site of Whitfield's original chapel. Great hopes were entertained that with the new building would come a revival of interest in the services, but this has not yet been shown. Some strangers drop in, and various special efforts have been made to attract the residents in the locality, but without much permanent success. The Baptists have three chapels of the stricter kind, and there is a Unitarian Church, once the well-known scene of the ministry of the late Dr. Martineau, whilst the Cathedral of the Irvingites is in Gordon Square. The pastor of the latter church, in courteously declining our request for an interview, disclaims all desire for his congregation to be regarded as a separate community, and says that, in so far as they are in

any way distinct from their Christian brethren, 'it is purely for spiritual ends.' They endeavour, 'in all matters referred to in your letter, to do our part as individuals by helping existing agencies, but have *no* organizations for such purposes.'

In All Souls' parish there is a Roman Catholic church, serving, it is said, a population of some three thousand souls. Of these, it is claimed, about one-half as a rule come to the church on Sunday mornings. They are mostly foreigners.

Of the Passmore Edwards Settlement, which shares with the churches the social work done in South St. Pancras, some account will be found in the chapter on Settlements and Polytechnics in Vol. VII.

## § 4

### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Prior to the Act of 1899, the Holborn Board of Works, the Strand Board of Works, the Vestries of St. James, St. Giles, and St. Martin, and in a lesser degree of St. Pancras and Marylebone, had each jurisdiction over some portion of the district described in this chapter. The functions of Marylebone and St. Pancras remain undisturbed, but those of the rest have been merged in the new Councils of Westminster and Holborn. Local government has been much unified by this change. The City Council of Westminster, whose authority extends also over St. George's, Hanover Square, has seventy members, but supersedes bodies which had between them some 550 representatives. Under the altered circumstances it is not necessary to describe in any detail the work of the



defunct authorities. The difficulties to be dealt with have been already indicated, and it will be enough to recapitulate them, and to say in a general way what is being done to meet them.

South of Oxford Street and Holborn, and especially to the east of Charing Cross Road, the main fact is the combination of increased crowding with decrease of population. It is accompanied by extremely high rents and a continual growth amongst the old courts and streets of the evil conditions which demand demolition. The necessity for demolition in its turn affords the opportunity for local improvements; the recasting of minor streets, the widening of old thoroughfares and reconstruction with larger and larger aim. It is a gradual process, but each step seems to involve the next, and it must almost necessarily end in a complete change in the character of the whole district, with far-reaching results.

Market porters and other labourers of rough class are likely to be driven out, though doubtless they will cling to the last; but there is no absolute necessity for them to reside here. They can live almost as conveniently south of the Thames and come in to their work. They are being driven out partly by the provision of better accommodation, which will inevitably be occupied by those whose work ties them closely to the neighbourhood of the great shopping streets and who can afford to pay the higher rent. These compete among themselves, and are again overbidden by those whose occupations, still more definitely localized, will not bear investigation. Very high rents can be afforded by those who traffic in vice, and the refusal of many landlords to accept such tenants only raises the price obtained by others less scrupulous. The vigilance which pursues and prosecutes is of little avail. Brothels and gambling hells are no sooner closed in one street than they are

opened in another ; for the demand is constant and the profits are large. Harrying is probably the only policy to pursue, and, if it does no more, will serve to keep alive the conscience of the house owner. The attitude of the local authorities has been one of watchfulness rather than activity, and some spasmodic and half-hearted efforts to check overcrowding and vice have met with indifferent success.

Apart from the Clare Market and Strand improvement scheme, which is being entirely undertaken by the London County Council, demolitions and alterations have been left to private enterprise, acting under public regulation. General sanitation has been well looked after, and so has the cleansing and maintenance of the streets. There is a great need of public open spaces in this southern district, and it would be well if Soho and Golden Squares could be utilized for this purpose.

North of Oxford Street the difficulties have been less acute, and have been mainly confined, so far as this particular area was concerned, to the portions controlled by the late St. Pancras Vestry and Holborn Board of Works. Both these authorities have been taken to task by the London County Council for failure to comply with some urgent recommendations of their own Medical Officers and Sanitary Committees.

For Poor Law administration, the Boards of Guardians of St. Giles, Westminster, and the Strand, are mainly responsible. Each has, with a small and declining population, a steadily diminishing relief list, but that of the Strand is still heavy, owing to the lavish method adopted. As some excuse for this, it is suggested that, in spite of huge clearances, the poorest still cling to the neighbourhood, whilst out-relief is condoned on the ground that the children of the old people who receive it are so largely casual

workers, that it is almost impossible to prove legally their ability to contribute to their parents' support, whilst if a modicum of relief be given, the children do usually manage to add to it. On this account the Board will never, acting on principle, give enough entirely to support a case.

There does not seem a sufficient task here to warrant the continuance of three distinct Poor Law authorities, particularly in view of the demolitions still in progress, and consequent prospective reduction in population. An amalgamation would have advantages both administrative and economical. It would perhaps be possible to abolish the large workhouse in Poland Street, and the clearing away of this building might form the basis of a scheme for opening out this tightly-packed locality.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES. MAP K. (VOL. II., CHAPTER IV.).  
West Central London.

Adjoining Maps—N. Inner North-West and North London (Vol. I.); E. East Central (p. 165); S. Westminster (Vol. III.); W. West London (Vol. III.).

**General Character.**—The map covers the districts of Bloomsbury, Soho, Strand and St. Giles, together with a small portion of Clerkenwell. Within its boundaries are found the Law Courts, British Museum, National Gallery, and some of the public offices, in addition to the principal theatres and shopping streets of the Metropolis; around these cluster hotels, boarding-houses and restaurants, and many of their employees live in neighbouring block dwellings. Bloomsbury is remarkable for its boarding-houses, the Strand for its hotels and theatres, publishing offices, and the Law Courts; St. Giles and Soho for its colonies of foreigners and prostitutes; the neighbourhood of Portland Place for its doctors and nursing homes, and Pall Mall for its clubs and residential chambers. As a whole it is probably better known to the foreign visitor than any other area in London. Running across the map from East to West are four fairly distinct bands of population—working class from Gray's Inn Road to Southampton Row, middle class (increasing) from Southampton Row to Tottenham Court Road, working class thence to Great Portland Street, where the 'red' and 'yellow' classes again prevail. South of Oxford Street there is a large area of poverty (decreasing) on the east side of Drury Lane and round Clare Market; very mixed working class (pink and purple) between Oxford Street and Leicester Square; and shops, hotels, bachelors' chambers, and a few very large houses of the wealthy (Carlton House Terrace and Arlington Street) in the south-west corner of the map.

**Poverty Areas.**—There are many patches of poverty, but only one large poor area, that on the east side of Drury Lane, where there is a colony of poor Irish market employees, but this is now in course of displacement by demolition. There is less dark blue than there was ten years ago, owing to the encroachment of business premises, hotels, and residential flats built for the servant-keeping classes, for wealthy vagrants or visitors. The poor patches remaining, nearly always represent old house property; such are the dark blue and black streets off Gray's Inn Road, Tonbridge Street, Burton Crescent, Whitfield Street, Foley Street, Charlotte Street, &c. Owing to demolition and re-building, Seven Dials has almost lost its reputation for poverty, thieves, and bird-fanciers; the narrow courts off the Strand and much of the surroundings of Clare Market, with their population of market porters, newspaper sellers, cab-runners, and odd-job men are also gone. But some very bad bits remain, such as Little Wild Street, one end of Parker Street, Nottingham Place and Turner's Court off St. Martin's Lane.

**Employments.**—Season trades, with alternating periods of high pressure and slackness, are characteristic of the district. West End customers demanding specialities in a hurry make the presence of highly skilled, highly paid resident workmen a necessity. Such are many of the employees of tailors, dressmakers, and bootmakers, who work either at home or in 'sittings' as well as in the factory. In addition, there is an army of hotel and restaurant waiters, shop assistants, theatrical employees and printers—the poorest are the odd-job men, market porters, hawkers, sandwich men, flower sellers and widows dependent on charing and office cleaning. There is a colony of Jewish tailors round Broad Street in Soho. Prostitution, pursued largely by non-residents, may also be considered

a regular occupation in this district, both in the central parts and along the Euston Road in the neighbourhood of the large railway termini. In the North-East, near the railways, live many cabmen.

**Housing and Rents.**—The whole district is noted for many-storeyed houses, high rents and crowding. Houses tenanted by one family, except in the most wealthy streets, are the exception. The working classes live in models and tenement houses; the well-to-do in flats, boarding houses, chambers and hotels. The nearer the centre, the higher the rents. There are many common lodging-houses. Turner's Court (black), already referred to, is particularly bad; entered by passage 3 ft. wide, high factory wall running along one side, houses with four storeys, 16 ft. frontage, windows facing dead wall, eight rooms in each house, each tenanted by a family, front room 5s 6d, back room 5s, small room at top 3s 6d; very dark, occupied by a low class of market porters and costers; a rough, smelly, airless, and dirty spot. The average rent for single rooms in STRAND district is 4s to 5s. In ST. GILES's the typical house has three storeys, 16 or 17 ft. frontage, sometimes without basements, let out in rooms at 3s 6d to 4s for one room and 6s 6d to 7s for two rooms.

In SOHO most of the houses are let in floors, three rooms to a floor—ground floor 15s, first floor 16s, second floor 15s, third floor (with only two rooms) 10s. The minimum for single rooms is 3s, and the maximum 8s. As accommodation decreases, rents and crowding increase. Crowding in this district is only partially a measure of poverty. The large demand for rooms as workshops as well as living rooms, the influx of foreigners and the extravagant offers made by those who wish to use their rooms for immoral purposes, all tend to force rents upwards. [1898.]

**Markets.**—Only the working classes and foreigners patronize street markets: shops supply the well-to-do. Street markets are found, therefore, only in the poorer districts and in Soho. Following the demolition of the courts off the Strand, the glories of Blackmore Street and Clare Market have almost disappeared. North of Oxford Street there are Marchmont Street market out of Tavistock Place, and Godge Street out of Tottenham Court Road. South of Oxford Street, Berwick Street in Soho and Little Earl Street in St. Giles's. Covent Garden Market is not much used by the working classes; in the early morning the streets between Long Acre and the Strand are blocked by the carts of dealers buying fruits and flowers. Many of the smaller restaurant keepers buy in Little Earl Street. Some prices—good rump steaks, 10d to 1s lb., meat scraps from 3d lb.; good potatoes, 4 lb. for 2d; hot bullock's cheek, 4d lb., and the same for fresh ox liver; fair mackerel, 4d and 2d each according to size. Good apples, plums and damsons, 1½d to 2d lb. Bread, 4 lb. loaf, 6d (on the same day round the corner in Great White Lion Street a similar loaf was selling at 5d). [September, 1898.]

**Public-houses.**—Remarkable for their number; out of all proportion to the resident population, except, on the Bedford Estate, where there are very few: many rebuilt and noticeable for their elaborate and beautiful exteriors: their number due in great part to the large influx of workers by day and pleasure seekers by night.

**Places of Amusement.**—The Strand focusses the theatrical life of England. In spite of the increase of suburban theatres those in the centre seem but to gain in popularity. Several new theatres and music halls have been built in recent years. The names of the Strand theatres are both too numerous and too well-known to need mention here.

**Open Spaces.**—North of Oxford Street are many private squares, but the only open spaces to which the public are admitted are Red Lion

Square, St. George's Burial Ground, and St. Andrew's Gardens, Gray's Inn Road. South of Oxford Street: Lincoln's Inn Fields, the Embankment Gardens and St. James's Park are public play-grounds. Public open spaces are badly wanted in the district abutting on Pentonville, in the Cleveland Street district, and in St. Giles's and Soho, where St. Anne's and St. Giles's churchyards and Leicester Square are the only spaces open to the public. Even such squares as Golden Square and Soho Square, which are immediately surrounded by a working-class population, are closed.

**Health.**—Fair. The pale listless faces of the children are noticeable in the central districts. The soil is sand and gravel, but the high houses and narrow streets, and the absence of open spaces, are against healthy child life.

**Changes of Population.**—The rich and fashionable, who once dwelt in Soho and Bloomsbury, have left, though there has lately been some return to Bloomsbury: their places have been taken by business houses, offices, hotels and boarding houses. Jews have come into Soho in the neighbourhood of Broad Street and form there a West End Whitechapel. The poor, on being dispossessed, have to leave the district altogether; many of those from the Drury Lane neighbourhood have gone to Battersea, Fulham, and North Kensington. Generally speaking, the very poor have been driven out by demolition and rebuilding for the middle classes, and the middle classes by the encroachment of business houses and the multiplication of boarding houses and hotels. The servant-keeping classes reappear as tenants of flats.

**Means of Locomotion.**—Improvement of the means of locomotion will do little to remove the congestion in Soho, St. Giles's or the Strand districts. The majority of those who live there now will do so as long as there is house-room to be found. The importance of living in the immediate neighbourhood of their work more than counterbalances the discomforts of high rent and over-crowding. Three great railway termini tap the district along the Euston Road on the North and Charing Cross on the South: the circle of Underground Railway touches both the North and the South, and the Central London Electric Railway cuts the centre of the map along Oxford Street. Connection north and south across the centre of the district by means of tubes or quick trams is badly wanted. There are horse-tramways along Theobald's Road eastwards and along the Gray's Inn Road between Holborn and King's Cross on the eastern boundary of the map. Omnibuses run along all the main roads.

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### PLACES OF WORSHIP.

**List of Parish Churches** situated in the district described in Chapter IV., with other PLACES OF WORSHIP grouped in their ecclesiastical parishes.

#### All Saints, Gordon Square.

Bapt. Chapel, Gower St.  
Cath. Apostolic Ch., Gordon Sq.

#### All Saints, Margaret St.

Welsh Bapt. Ch., Castle St. East.  
Unitn. Ch., Little Portland St.  
Fitzroy Hall, Little Portland St.

#### All Souls, Langham Place.

All Souls' Church House, Gt.  
Titchfield St.  
St. Peter's Chapel, Vere St.  
St. Paul's Ch., Gt. Portland St.  
Rehoboth Bapt. Chapel, Riding  
House St.

**All Souls** (*continued*)—

- S. Charles Borromeo (R. C.),  
Upper Ogle St.  
Ogle Mews Ragged School.  
St. George's Hall, Brethren,  
Langham Pl.

**Christ Church, Woburn Sq.**

- Christ Ch. Hall, Herbrand St.  
Baptist Chapel, Keppel St.

**Holy Cross, Cromer St.**

- L. C. Miss. Hall, Cromer St.  
L.C.Miss. Hall, Midhope Bldgs.

**Holy Trinity, Gray's Inn Rd.\***

- Bapt. Ch., John St.  
Church of Humanity, John St.  
\* The church itself is situated in  
St. Bartholomew's parish.

**Holy Trinity, Lincoln's Inn  
Fields.**

- Holy Trinity Miss. Rm., Wild Ct.  
Wesl. Ch., Gt. Queen St.  
SS. Anselm and Cecilia (R. C.),  
Sardinia St.  
St. Giles' Christian Miss., Little  
Wild St.  
Workmen's Hall (L.C.M.), 185,  
Drury Lane.

**Holy Trinity, Marylebone.**

- St. Mark's Ch., Charlotte St.  
Regent's Pk. Chapel (Bapt.),  
Park Sq.  
Central Synagogue, Gt. Port-  
land St.

**St. Andrew, Wells Street.****St. Anne, Soho.**

- French Protestant Ch., Soho Sq.  
Bloomsbury Miss. (Bapt.),  
Meard St.  
Italian Miss., Frith St.  
L'Eglise de Notre Dame (R. C.),  
Leicester Place.

**St. Clement Danes.**

- Clare Market Mission.

**St. George, Bloomsbury.**

- Bloomsbury Bapt. Ch., Shaftes-  
bury Avenue.  
St. John's French Episcopal  
Ch., Shaftesbury Avenue.

**St. George Martyr, Queen Sq.**

- St. George's Mis., Ormond Yard.  
Albert Youth's Christian Insti-  
tute, 49,, Lamb's Conduit St.  
Shaftesbury Memorial Hall,  
Lamb's Conduit St.

**St. Giles-in-the-Fields.**

- Christ Church, Endell St.  
St. Giles' Miss., Short's Gardens.  
Seven Dials Miss., West St.  
Soho Bapt. Ch., Shaftesbury Av.  
Protestant Swiss Ch., Endell St.  
St. Giles' Christian Miss., Neal St.  
St. Giles' Christian Miss., Drury  
Lane.  
St. Giles' Christian Miss., Seven  
Dials.  
London Medical Miss., Short's  
Gardens.

**St. James, Piccadilly.**

- St. Philip's Chapel, Regent St.  
Wesl. Miss., St. James's Hall.  
Theistic Ch., Swallow St.  
Church of the Assumption  
(R. C.), Warwick St.  
Western Synagogue, St. Alban's  
Place.

**St. John Evangelist, Char-  
lotte St.**

- Whitfield's Tabernacle (Cong.),  
Tottenham Court Rd.  
Cleveland Hall (Wesl.), Cleve-  
land St.  
German Lutheran Ch., Cleve-  
land St.  
Scandinavian Miss., Percy St.

**St. John Evangelist, Drury  
Lane.**

- St. John's Miss., 11, Castle St.  
Inns of Court Miss., Drury Lane.  
Ch. of Scotland, Crown Court.

**St. John Evangelist, Holborn.**

- Bapt. Chapel, Kingsgate St.  
(rebuilding).

**St. John Baptist, Gt. Marl-  
boro' St.**

- St. John's Miss. Room, West St.  
Craven Hall (Wesl.), Foubert's  
Place.

**St. Luke, Soho.****St. Martin-in-the-Fields.**

- Ch. Royal, St. James's Palace.  
St. Martin's Miss., Bedfordbury.  
Cong. Ch., Orange St.  
Friends' Meeting House, 52,  
St. Martin's Lane.

**St. Mary, Charing Cross Rd.**

- Welsh Pres. Ch., Charing  
Cross Rd.  
St. Patrick's (R. C.), Soho Sq.

**St. Mary-le-Strand.**

**St. Michael, Burleigh St.**  
Exeter Hall, Strand.

**St. Pancras.**

St. Pancras Miss., Lancing St.  
St. Pancras' Miss., Sandwich St.  
Compton Place Hall (Pres.),  
Compton Place.  
Somers Town Hall (Wesl.),  
Chalton St.  
Salv. Army Hall, Burton St.  
\*Temp. Miss., Compton St.

**St. Paul, Covent Garden.**

Corpus Christi (R. C.), Maiden  
Lane.  
Maiden Lane Synagogue,  
Maiden Lane.

**St. Peter, Great Windmill St.**  
St. Peter's Parish Rm., Archer  
St.

**St. Peter, Regent Square.**

Foundling Hospital Chapel,  
Guildford St.  
Henrietta Bapt. Chapel, Wake-  
field St.  
Pres. Ch., Regent Square.

**St. Saviour, Fitzroy Square.**

St. Saviour's Miss., Euston Rd.  
\*L. C. Miss. Rm., Warren St.

**St. Thomas, Regent St.**

**Extra Parochial Churches.**

Lincoln's Inn Chapel.  
Gray's Inn Chapel.  
Chapel Royal, Savoy.

\* Now closed (1902).



The Streets are coloured according to social condition of inhabitants as under:--

Lowest  
Class



Very  
Poor



Moderate  
Poverty



Poverty &  
Comfort (mixed)



Fairly  
Comfortable



Well-  
to-do



Wealthy



Combined colouring (as Pink and Red) indicates a mixture of the Classes which the Colours represent.

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## CHAPTER V

### ILLUSTRATIONS

I would remind the reader that the extracts from our note books which follow were not written for publication, and that they form a very insignificant part of the mass of information which we have collected. They have been selected solely as illustrations and are only to be regarded in that light.

#### § 1

##### CHURCH OF ENGLAND

(1) *One of the older East London Churches.*—The church is a large one of classical style of architecture, with a rather dreary interior curtained off against draughts. I was seated before the morning service began. A number of boys were already there in two groups, apparently divided according to age, with someone in charge of each group, while for the further preservation of order an impressive church beadle in black gown and skull cap, carrying a large silver-headed mace, patrolled the centre aisle. Near me were seated a woman with a baby, and another woman, and to these, others, mostly women, were slowly added, till there may have been fifteen or twenty in all. Another group of lads came in and seated themselves; of them no one was in charge. They took their places, handed round books, and throughout the service behaved

very well and reverently, though they were of quite the roughest kind, even criminal looking. Their generally devout behaviour was remarkable, and I assume that they were from a Church Army home, or some such institution. The three groups of boys, taken together, were certainly over a hundred in number. I came again in the evening, and was again seated before the service commenced. The small boys were not there; but the others were, just as in the morning, the big, rough boys in perfect order, making the service a part of their life at any rate, but they did not venture to sing. There was indeed no body of sound from the church to add volume to the choir, for though the rest of the congregation joined in, more or less, they were too few in numbers, and one could hear each individual voice. There were more present than in the morning; perhaps as many as thirty in all, besides the boys. The vicar, when seen, mentioned the boys, but claimed two hundred in addition as his usual evening congregation.

(2) *St. Peter's (Wapping)* is an historic church in the annals of English Ritualism; its first head, Father Lowder, having been a leader in the 'Catholic Revival.' Father Wainright, who now occupies Father Lowder's place, was with him as curate twenty-five years ago, and served in the same capacity also under Father Mac-konochie, whose successor as vicar he became.

. . . . . As we passed through the streets the Father was greeted by about half the people we met; some seemed a little shy and perhaps ashamed; others, I fancied, avoided seeing him; but a general impression was given that he was regarded as a friend. He was welcomed by almost every child he met, many of them rushing across the street into his arms, and all seemed anxious for a look or word of recognition. Sometimes we had quite a little group round us. To them all he was 'Father.' The special value of the title 'father' was spoken of. It applies to all ages, and enables things to be said and done which, with a plain 'Mr.', would be impossible. . . . .

There is no overt resistance to any of the ritualistic practices of the church. It has established its own traditions, and the people are said to be 'both loyal and affectionate.' As an illustration of the 'things that

comfort,' it was mentioned that the greatest rioter during Father Lowder's time had recently died, but had sent for Father Wainright in order to make his confession and receive the last rites. Father Wainright referred also to the help that it was to him to have been in the parish with Father Lowder, even saying that he owed all his influence to that fact. The position of the mission here was 'made' by the cholera epidemic in Father Lowder's time, and his successor is ever on the look-out for opportunities that maladies provide. They bring suffering, but from his point of view they may bring blessing too.

(3) *The Church of the Holy Redeemer* has morning service at 10.30, at which were present some twenty or thirty evident *habituées*, all female, and at 11.15 is given the service of the 'Holy Eucharist, with hymns and sermon.' The building is very stately; long and narrow, with white walls and columns, and a stone-vaulted roof. The altar, beautifully lighted, stands under a canopy. The congregation are accommodated with rush-bottomed chairs, and the chairs were fairly filled, but the total numbers present were not great. Almost all seemed young; many of them girls and children, very few men, and these young. The priest stood at the altar in magnificent vestments, and on each side of him were acolytes. The congregation knelt, and sang kneeling, just as in Roman Catholic churches. The lower part of the walls and the bases of the columns are panelled in oak, all the rest is bare white stone, ornamented only by a series of pictures of the Stations of the Cross. The pulpit stands out from one of the columns, and at the side of the pulpit hangs a crucifix. In the evening I went again. Lighted up, the effect is still more beautiful; and one becomes conscious of the whole extent of the church. The altar is not at the end, but leaves room behind for two small altars at the sides, so placed that one could walk round as in a cathedral. The church is not arranged for large numbers, but as to its seats was well filled. Those present in the evening were principally of the middle class, but seemed to include all classes. The congregation, both morning and evening, were very reverent. The singing was mainly by the choir.

(4) *Mothers' Meetings and Gifts.*

. . . . . In order to steer clear of any taint of bribery, the presents the Sisters had been accustomed to give at Christmas entertainments were stopped by the vicar, whereupon he received the following remarkable letter from the husband of one of the leading mothers:—

“DEAR SIR,

“My wife tells me you would like my opinion upon stopping the gifts at the mothers' meeting. You must know that all the mothers do go for the gifts, which are given by the benevolent to bring mothers to hear the Word of the Lord, therefore no one must think the gift too high so long as they can bring souls to Christ, which is any Christian's duty—not forgetting ‘All who give to the poor lendeth to the Lord.’ You refer to the gifts causing scandal; it is a pity you did not tell the mothers that the offertory is, and always has been, regarded as a scandal by those outside the church. Still, when we take up the Cross, we must bear all insults, as my Jesus did for me and you. My wife does not go for the gift, but to pass a happy hour with those who love the Lord. So you can see I am not of your opinion. If you can enlighten me on the subject a reply will oblige. Yours respectfully,

\* \* \* \* \*

“*Motto*—£1000 for the church—nothing for poor mothers.”

The vicar's reply (a difficult task) was in admirable taste. The result of this effort after purity was that some of the mothers transferred their allegiance to a neighbouring mission. It should be added that as many gifts as before were given, but poverty was made the sole basis of distribution.

(5) *Social Meetings of Communicants.*

. . . . . The Church organizations in the parish are few; the object of all, except the mothers' meetings, being to recruit and keep together the body of communicants. This is illustrated by the following extract from the magazine:—

“Three years ago last October, our readers may remember, a step was made in the direction of a fuller recognition of the bond uniting all communicants, by having on the day before the general communion at the dedication festival, a meeting for a simple meal, which might, it was hoped, in its way and measure, realize something of the aim and blessing of the ancient love feasts. . . . Smaller meetings, parties, or gatherings of various sections of the communicants have of course been going on here as in other parishes, but there seemed to be a place and need for some gathering together (other than the essential and supreme meeting for Sacramental Communion in church), where the bond of fellowship might be more realized and strengthened, which already exists between all who in simplicity and truth partake together of one Bread. . . . . We think that the Christmas social meeting of communicants held in the Clerkenwell Town Hall, afforded a very happy response to the want we have described. . . . . Invitations were confined entirely to the communicants, nor were any sent to such as appeared to have definitely lapsed from their privileges and duties.”

There follows an account of the orchestral string band, the songs, the refreshments, &c.; and we read “speeches and songs were succeeded at about 9.30 by dancing.” “The numbers present in the hall must have been close on three hundred.” These social meetings have become an institution. Two or three of them are held yearly.

(6) *A Clergy House.*

. . . . . The vicar's private room, into which I was shown, is a large untidy place; carpetless, curtainless, comfortless; in one corner a pile of clothes ready to be given away, a few books on the shelves of a large book-case, and dust nearly everywhere. On one wall hung a large crucifix. There was no fire—it was the 10th day of January—and the gas-stove was unlit. My arrival gave an excuse for lighting it, to the satisfaction of the servant, ‘the Father being so self-denying.’

(7) *Systematic Visitation.*

. . . . . The parish is systematically visited in the poorer parts, and the sample book we borrowed indicates that the work is very thorough. It seems to show that in the Peabody block to which it applied, not a tenement is missed, and that particulars are taken as far as possible as to place of worship, day school, Sunday school, mothers' meeting and temperance. It shows, too, that in the course of the year many of the people are visited several times, and that there is a good deal of badgering to attend services and meetings. A few extracts follow.

It may be noticed throughout that the women are very lavish in promises and the men reticent and reserved. As to whether the promises have been kept there is seldom any indication:—

A \* \* \* \* \*, French polisher, bad-tempered man; there are twins; wife entirely under influence of the High Church Sisters. Mrs. A \* \* \* \* \* promised to go to evening service, and to tell others of it. *Second visit.* Visitor saw Mr. A \* \* \* \* \* alone, and was asked to excuse him as he was busy, but would try to attend men's services.

B \* \* \* \* \*, man in bad health, woman a monthly nurse; large family; rather inclined to beg; would be Church or Chapel, whichever paid best. *Second visit.* Mr. B \* \* \* \* \* unable to attend mission services. Mrs. B \* \* \* \* \* promised to go some evenings; elder daughter promised also, and to get friends to go with them.

C \* \* \* \* \*, policeman; very good people and parochially minded; boys in choir. Mrs. C \* \* \* \* \* promised to go to mission—afraid husband too tired after his work; same on Sundays, being policeman. *Second visit.* Mrs. C \* \* \* \* \* surprised at second visit, told visitor not to worry; if people wished to go, they would do so; and if they did not, would stay away.

D \* \* \* \* \*, man lame; keeps cats' meat barrow. Mrs. D \* \* \* \* \* promised to go to mission some Sunday; worked hard, and too tired week-days. Mr. D \* \* \* \* \* would not promise even Sundays. Three



girls, sixteen, twelve, and seven, do not go to Sunday school; eldest out with her father and barrow on Sunday morning; next girl cooks dinner. *Third visit.* Mrs. D \* \* \* \* \* promised the girls for Sunday school first afternoon when re-opened; said they had forgotten; second Sunday two youngest came, next Sunday eldest promised.

E \* \* \* \* \*, a family who have come a good deal under Church notice; they are never long together at the same place of worship.

F \* \* \* \* \*, brewers' man; in the volunteers. Mrs. F \* \* \* \* \* is rather intelligent; at one time with the High Church Sisters, and another with the Quakers; likes a fuss over her, but one can't help liking her. *Second visit.* Mrs. F \* \* \* \* \* promised to go to mission and try to persuade others.

G \* \* \* \* \*, widow, Dissenter, belongs to X \* \* \* \* \* Street Mission; daughter goes to work at mission.

H \* \* \* \* \*, market porter; Mr. and Mrs. H \* \* \* \* \* attend chapel; children Sunday school over the water somewhere. Mr. H \* \* \* \* \* said had not time to go to men's week-day service, being in his dinner hour, and he was too tired after work in the evenings; promised to go to men's service on Sundays.

I \* \* \* \* \*, large family; wife cleans offices. Mrs. I \* \* \* \* \* promised to take turns with daughter in going to evening service; not sure about son and husband; would try and get them to go. *Second visit.* Eldest girl promised to coax her brother to go.

J \* \* \* \* \*, postman; very devout and eccentric; peculiar views; wife the same; children not baptized.

K \* \* \* \* \*, a pensioner; he and his wife decline to be visited by me; they will see a clergyman.

L \* \* \* \* \*, quite a Dissenting family, but very friendly. Mrs. L \* \* \* \* \* at mission services.

M \* \* \* \* \*, cellarman. Mrs. M \* \* \* \* \* goes about to hear celebrated preachers. They are a worthy elderly couple.

N \* \* \* \* \*, tailor for West End firm; quite a Church family.

## § 2

## WESLEYAN MISSIONS, ETC.

(1) *The Mahogany Bar (Wesleyan East London Mission).*

In the evening the hall, which is a rather cheerless place, with large galleries supported on twisted columns of polished wood, having been formerly the concert hall of a public-house, was filled as to the body, and especially the centre portion, with a gathering consisting almost entirely of children and those in charge of them. When I entered a collection was being taken up, and this was followed by the feeble singing of a hymn. There was a harmonium in the gallery behind the platform, and a number of young women to lead the singing, while a man conducted energetically; but it was not an inspiring performance. At the back, near where I sat, there was a row of young men who behaved with offensive indifference. They did not sing—would hardly stand up during the hymns—and lolled as they sat, nudging each other, and ‘carrying on’ the whole time.

The same mission was visited three years later, and the report is very similar. A Sunday morning service was announced for 11.30. Just at that hour a man opened the swing doors from within, and some thirty decently-dressed children, who had been at Sunday school, came out. Three workers followed and stood at the door, and were shortly joined by a Sister. They looked anxiously up and down, like sister Anne of Blue-beard fame, to see if any one was coming, but up to 11.45 without avail. Three of them then departed, leaving the fourth; I suppose in case any belated worshipper should turn up.

In the evening we met the brass band of this mission starting out. An open-air service was held at a street corner not far off, and the service at the hall began at 7. For it there was an audience of fifty adults, besides the twelve workers who were on the platform. The adults were obviously of the working class, distinctly poorer than those who form the congregation at the parent chapel, but, with the exception of three rough, collarless men who sat at the back, none gave any

impression of poverty. There were also present a number of children. Amongst those at the back of the hall were a bevy of lads and lassies. Whatever might be the case with the latter, the former had evidently not come to worship; most likely they followed the girls, who, too, at the start talked and chatted in a loud tone about mundane things, but during the service listened reverently and sang lustily; and it must be said that, after an appeal from the leader, insisting, while he read the lesson, upon quiet 'amongst those sitting under the gallery,' there was no more disturbance. The address with which the service concluded was on the text, 'All we like sheep have gone astray,' and gave us the old message in a very forcible and moving style. There was an after-service for those who wished to stay, of which the object is the harvesting of souls by the road of the penitent form.

Week after week, from year to year, this work goes on. An interval of three years shows no change in it. Very little is accomplished, and it never could be maintained were it not that it is in some way its own reward.

(2) *Sunday Evening at Cleveland Hall (West London Mission).*

At 7 o'clock the hall, which may hold four hundred to five hundred, was already almost full, and eventually there was scarcely a vacant seat. There were about five women to one man, and a considerable sprinkling of children. Those seated near me were young women of the servant or shop class, and the congregation, as a whole, were of the highest working class, with a small number of the poor and a larger number of those obviously on or over the border of the middle class. The order of the service was as usual, and the sermon a strong emotional appeal on the love of the Cross. There was an after-meeting, which lasted thirty-five minutes, for which a large number stayed; I should think quite one hundred and fifty. This meeting was directed at the unconverted. Hymns and prayers (by men specially called on by the leader) followed alternately, interspersed by strongly-worded appeals to those who were touched to come

out and indicate it in some way, by lifting a hand or by standing up in their place. There was no visible response. The leader would not, he said, address any individual personally, because 'people were so touchy,' but one of the Sisters sat down beside a woman evidently trying to move her, and a man passed from one to another, but apparently without success. He came to me with 'Are you trusting in the Saviour?' 'Are you sure?' I bent my head, and he went on to another man with whom he appeared to plead and wrestle for the remainder of the time—a stubborn, but perhaps a hopeful case.

On another Sunday evening, at the same hall, there may have been one hundred and fifty present, of whom about one hundred were adults. Many were quite distinctly middle class, and with the rarest exception none looked poor. The numbers probably depend on the preacher. On this occasion it was an elderly man, who preached a hopelessly dull sermon lasting half an hour.

At Chalton Hall on the same evening, thirty women, twelve men, and a few children were the whole congregation up to ten minutes past seven, but others may have come later.

### (3) *Wesleyan Missions—Week-day Services.*

*Monday evening.*—Devotional meeting at Craven Hall:—The numbers were good, about ten men and sixty women being present. Except one or two who were of an obviously poor, but not rough class, all seemed to be of quite the highest working, or small shop-keeping class; quiet, decent, respectable people, not at any rate looking as though they had ever needed reclamation. No doubt those who come on Monday are a gathering of the elect. The meeting began at 8.30 and lasted exactly an hour; the order was hymn, prayer by the minister; hymn, prayer by a Sister; hymn, during which stewards walked up and down with paper and pencil for requests for written prayer or thanksgiving or praise, followed by the presentation of these prayers and thanks to God, who was referred to as anxiously waiting to receive them; then two more hymns, the collection and a sermon of

about twenty minutes. The special prayers were for Mr. Price Hughes' recovery (he was absent from his post owing to sickness), for the mission, and for employment; and there were thanksgivings for getting work and for the souls saved on Sunday, &c. Mr. Hughes' illness had been referred to earlier. 'He had been stricken down by a mysterious dispensation of Providence.' 'Many were the prayers that had been offered up for him last night' (Sunday); and these prayers were being answered. 'He was getting better every hour of every day.' In the prayers uttered by the leader and by the Sister there was doubtless sincere feeling in the background, but it was smothered by the hackneyed and conventional language which all used. The same well-worn phrases, coming again and again, were rendered the more trying by their thick punctuation with *Amens* by the leader when any of the others were praying. No one else was moved in the same manner, and one felt it to be an absolutely unreal expression of emotion. The sermon was very vigorous and turgid in language but to me entirely without interest. The audience seemed to like it.

*Tuesday evening.*—Mid-week service at St. George's Chapel (East London):—It was a vile night, with a cutting wind and sleet, when few would wish to leave their fireside, and, after seeing the opening, I hurried home to warmth and comfort. The number in attendance was fourteen women, five men and two lads, all clearly working-class people from the neighbourhood.

*Wednesday evening.*—At Cleveland Hall (West London):—On this occasion the usual service had given way to a lecture on the life of John Wesley, with lime-light views. There was only a scanty audience, but the night was as deterrent as that of Tuesday.

*Another Wednesday.*—At about 8 p.m. I called at Chalton Hall (West London), where, according to the directory, there is a service on Wednesday at 8.30. There was, however, no sign of life, and the list on the notice board made no mention of this service, so I conclude that if ever held it has been given up. I then went on to Camden Chapel of the Central Mission, and here the notice board advertised a mid-week devotional meeting for 8 o'clock.

It may have been going on in some room at the back, but the place was all dark, and there was clearly no effort to attract.

*On Friday night* I again went to Camden Chapel, where a service of prayer and praise was advertised for 8 o'clock. I got there at 7.50, and stood outside until 8.15. A service may eventually have been held in a small back room which was lighted up, but while I was there only five young women passed in.

How much disheartenment such doings must reflect need hardly be pointed out, nor the strength of faith in those whose purpose does not fail.

(4) *The Wesleyan Twentieth Century Million Guinea Fund.*

A special week-day service and meeting was held at Wesley's Chapel, City Road, to inaugurate the collection of this fund. The originator of the idea occupied the chair, and was supported by a number of leading men of the denomination. The chapel, which is a building of some size with large galleries, was already full at 6.20, and I with difficulty found a place in the gallery, but from it could hear and see very well. The audience of men and women, in nearly equal proportions, looked extremely respectable; working class partly, but all well dressed and very earnest and orderly. The platform filled, and the service began at once, before the advertised time. There had been some other functions previously, including a 'love-feast,' and the remains of the tea could be seen in a sort of corridor building at one side of the chapel as one entered the church. The pleasant friendliness of such functions is, I imagine, one of the secrets of the strength of Methodism.

The singing of an eight-verse hymn, in which the last line of each verse was repeated in chorus, occupied some time, and the audience was then led in prayer by one of the ministers present. It was more a short address than a prayer, consisting of direct appeals to us as well as to the Almighty, by the minister individually, and also as speaking for us. After this the chairman explained the scheme and others spoke on the subject. A long first list of subscriptions already promised by

London circuits was read, and continually added to during the evening, representatives standing up one after another to make promises, till a total of sixty-five thousand guineas was reached.

The plan is to associate guineas with names. Ostensibly all are to be equally subscribers of one guinea, neither more nor less. It was explained that those who could afford more could make up the money for those who could not afford so much, but all the names would stand equal on the 'roll.' The total sum would be paid by each circuit, the number of guineas matching that of the names given, or, stretching this principle a little further, a rich circuit would perhaps help a poorer one 'out of its abundance.' In one way or another each guinea must mean a name, and almost any plan might be adopted to swell the number of names, especially, for instance, the paying for children, those of a man's own family or, in more wholesale fashion, those from Sunday-school classes, whose connection with Wesleyanism might be very slight indeed. Nor did some speakers shrink from suggesting (perhaps partly in joke) that it would be admissible to add the names of the dead as well as the living to this immortal roll.

The main purposes to which the million guineas shall be devoted have been laid down beforehand, and the allotment is evidently the result of carefully balanced claims. I gathered that 300,000 guineas were to go to the aid and support of village Methodism all over the country, and 250,000 to the building of central London quarters: a kind of cathedral for the body. Then 200,000 were set aside for education, and other objects filled up the total. It is a very large sum to raise, and some anxiety may have been felt, but the confidence expressed in the success of the attempt has since been justified.\*

What surprised me was the low level spiritually and intellectually of all that was said. No high note was ever struck, or only once (and I stayed to the end). This was when an old man 'trusted that the effort to

\* A magnificent site, that of the Royal Aquarium in Westminster, has now been acquired for the central headquarters of Methodism (July, 1902).

obtain money might not choke spirituality,' or something to that effect. At this meeting there was no spark of spirituality to choke: nothing appeared but the pursuit of success. The audience seemed thoroughly to enjoy the electioneering style in which the meeting was conducted, with the 'state of the poll' read out every few minutes amid a shower of feeble jokes. I looked for some deeper note of feeling. If a deeper note be not sounded, what good can come?

### § 3

#### TWO SUNDAYS

##### (1) *A Sunday in Central London.*

*St. Alban's* is a large handsome church, with a great hanging rood—a huge gilt cross bearing the figure of Christ, and at either side a saint standing—suspended in front of the chancel. Round the church are the Stations of the Cross for processional use. There is a good deal of painted glass, and an elaborate altar-piece in metal, the enclosing doors of which open out into a triptych. In front of this hang lighted lamps.

The service is of the highest; High Mass in fact. The priests, all three officiating, wore embroidered vestments, and the sacrifice of the Mass was made just as in Roman Catholic churches. There seemed to be as many men as women present: the men sat to the right, the women to the left. Almost all knelt through the service, and many crossed themselves at the proper times, and a considerable portion made all the requisite responses, following the order of the service exactly. There could be no question as to the feeling of devotion shown. They were men and women kneeling in the presence of their God. The service was beautifully given.

The *City Temple* is a large and rather ugly building, but its interior looks well enough when crowded with people. Here all centres on the great pulpit, behind which is the orchestral gallery and organ. Dr. Parker has a



strong voice and clear delivery, and even his most histrionic effects of aside or dropped voice, can be appreciated all over the building. It was the Sunday morning service, and every seat was filled. Dr. Parker is a great and earnest preacher, but had his lot fallen in that direction, he would have been a great actor. He has a keen sense of effect, and the whole service is an exquisite performance; in this way he obtains and moves his audience. The music is elaborately perfect; even in the hymns the congregation were hardly heard; the anthem was admirably given. It was the first Sunday in the month, and the sermon was on the true simple meaning of the Communion-table. He read and commented on the account the Bible gives of its institution, and held his audience spell-bound. At times murmured expressions of conviction and assent could be heard, seemingly irrepressible, especially when his subject had led the preacher to speak of confession and absolution; and he declared that we were all, every one, fallen: but that no one was needed except Christ to come between us and our God.

At *St. James's Hall*, in the afternoon of the same Sunday, at 3 o'clock, I found the audience slowly gathering, while an orchestra of twelve performers played light operatic music, such as on the stage might perhaps accompany a dance of villagers. There seemed no idea of limitation, sacred or even classical. The music was well given, and while it went on the hall gradually filled.

At 3.30, Mr. Hugh Price Hughes took his place as conductor of the 'Conference,' as this service is called. It is a religious service with hymns, prayers, Bible-lesson and collection, but the address is on some social or political question of the day, and on this occasion was on 'unlicensed drinking clubs,' the horrors of which were very freely painted. There is no discussion, but applause is permitted and was called forth now and then. The audience was manifestly sympathetic. Mr. Price Hughes has a harsh voice (no doubt he tries it desperately), but a very effective delivery. The service ended at 4.30 to the minute.

It was announced that the evening service would begin at 7, with orchestral prelude from 6.30. I arrived at

6.35 to find the hall full, and an overflow meeting being arranged in the smaller hall; but on going round to another door I was fortunate enough to secure a seat, being one of those made available by careful packing of the audience on the part of the ushers within. No one is admitted for whom there is not a seat. The crowded hall was an imposing sight. The orchestral seats, up to a certain height, were filled with band and chorus, and above with more audience, as at a popular concert. The musical prelude was of a more or less religious character, extremely well performed. It stopped a little before 7 o'clock, and there was a pause of some minutes, during which the great audience remained absolutely silent and noiseless. Then the platform filled with the ministers and their male lay supporters, and a group of Sisters of the People. When all these were seated, Mr. Price Hughes entered and took his place. It all went as at a public meeting, only without the incoming reception by applause; and there was no chairman—only the lecturer.

The service was entirely religious, and the sermon turned, as Dr. Parker's had done, on the celebration of the Lord's Supper that was to follow. The words of the preacher were earnest and effective, and the communion service showed him still more strongly in the light of a Christian teacher, leading his people in the way they should go; and, though the admixture of politics and platform arts with religion may shock, this leadership doubtless is the simple object with which all is done.

Those who stayed for the second service were not many compared to the previous audience, but being arranged in alternate rows they nearly filled the body of the hall, the rows between being left for the passage of the ministers, who carry round the elements and repeat the sacred words to those who partake. The whole service was very solemnly conducted.

The contrast in method between this and High Mass at St. Alban's was very great. Perhaps the comparison would lie more truly with the early celebration when all partake, than with the crowds of kneeling men and women who bow their heads when at High Mass the

big bell is tolled and the little bell tinkled to indicate the accomplishment of the great mystery.

(2) *Churches and people in Hoxton.*

One Sunday morning, weather dull and threatening, with occasional showers, I started from Haggerston Station and walked down the deserted Kingsland Road, meeting a strong contingent of the Salvation Army with a band and some thirty soldiers, but there was no other touch of animation. Turning into Hoxton Street the scene at once changed. The busy market was in full swing, and although the morning was comfortless enough to keep idlers away, the number of active buyers and sellers was more than sufficient to give life to the scene; but it was very gray life, and it would be difficult to find a more miserable set of purchasers. The butchers were, as usual, making most noise, and were also doing the most business; the next in point of activity were the women dealers in second-hand garments. Most of the shops seemed to be open. A middle-aged man, a youth and a small boy passed along giving away tracts. At *St. Saviour's* there was a congregation of about sixty. Outside I had seen dirt and squalor, and the vulgar noisy bargaining of a low-class market; in the church there was no suggestion even of the poverty of the neighbourhood. Outside the tract distributors had comprised all the visible respectability, but inside there was nothing but respectability. From *St. Saviour's* I went to the *Costers' Hall*, to find again about sixty people, and here, as at the church, religious observance had acted like a sieve, and only the respectable and well dressed had got in. In each place the contrast between the inside and outside scenes was almost startling. Crossing the street I next entered *St. Anne's Church*. There were barely thirty persons present, in addition to the choir, for the Communion service; and nearly all were as respectable and well dressed as at the two other places. At *St. Columba's*, except that a considerable number of children were present, things looked very much as they had done elsewhere, with the same respectability and approximately the same numbers. The men and women sat on different sides of the nave, there was no one in

the aisles; perhaps in all fifty women, twenty-five to thirty men, and some two hundred children were present. The sensation lay in the service, which differed hardly at all from a Roman Catholic celebration. Occasionally one caught a word or two and knew that the service was in English, and towards the end, in order to conform to the law, one of the young men acting as acolyte was given the wafer and wine with much ceremonial, but for the rest everything seemed to be as in a Catholic church in every respect. The swinging censer, the posturing, the vestments, the attendant priest, the movements at the altar, the prostration, the solemn moment of the elevation, the customary tinkling bell (heightened in sensuous effect by the ringing for a moment or two of the bell in the church tower), the solemn music and responses, made it difficult to realize that I was in an English church in Hoxton.

#### § 4

#### BAPTISTS, ETC.

##### (1) *Shoreditch Tabernacle.*

The building is characteristic of the man. Mr. Cuff told us how he, being unable to draw, tried unsuccessfully to explain his ideas to an architect, and how, walking away and thinking of this, he saw a coster's barrow loaded with 'William' pears, and found therein just the illustration needed. He bought a pear which he cut in half lengthwise, and was then able to show the architect what he wanted. 'That,' he said, 'should be the shape of the interior, and there, in the centre of the thin part, near the stalk, will be my place.' The architect seized the idea, and this building is the result. After our talk Mr. Cuff took me into it. The room we had been in opened upon the lower platform, and we climbed to the upper level. Standing there, one could imagine what the effect would be if the place were filled with two thousand faces turned towards the minister. There is not a corner

in either the body of the hall or the large galleries that his eye does not reach, nor where his voice would not easily be heard. Thus the Tabernacle is perfect in its way; but its way is not that of being a house of God. No feeling of sacredness attaches to it.

(2) *The revival of a Baptist Chapel.*

The main building holds eight hundred, and there are large vestries and schools. It was at one time a very popular chapel; to obtain a seat you had to come half an hour before the time of service. It fell away because the minister became too old, and, in addition, he held some unpopular doctrines. The present minister came two years ago, and (including his own friends) preached to thirteen persons on his first Sunday. Now, not only is the chapel fairly filled on Sunday evening, but as many as a hundred come to the Monday and Saturday prayer meetings, which are accounted 'the strength of the church.' The congregation has been drawn, for the most part, from the neighbouring churches; some from the Church of England, and some by transfers from other Nonconformists, not caused by people moving, but simply by their changing their churches. There were, however, also others who had been under religious influence, but had discontinued attendance at any service; none at all come from the poor streets: 'the preaching would not suit them.' In order to try to attract them, the minister would have to alter his style and preach as in a mission hall, and then the others would not like it. 'You cannot get the two classes together.'

(3) *Primitive Methodist P. S. A.*

At one of the Primitive Methodist chapels a Pleasant Sunday Afternoon service was advertised for 3.15, and attending it I found myself one of about fifteen men, all of them, except myself, evidently well-known members of the congregation, and extremely conscious of their failure to bring in the people from outside, for whose sake in particular this afternoon service was undertaken. It was an off Sunday, with no special

attraction; the minister was absent at some other service, and the meeting was conducted by a lay chairman. In the prayer which followed the initial hymn, their difficulties were set forth, and the success of the attempt prayed for; as was also that of the meeting at which their pastor was speaking elsewhere. The prayer was followed by another hymn, vigorously sung, everyone knowing the tune well. It was aided by the organ and one or two string instruments, and by a lady singer, who afterwards sang two solos; otherwise only men were present. After the first of these solos, the chairman opened the meeting for discussion as an 'open' occasion, there being no set subject or invited speaker. All present were asked to join, and to give a start it was then suggested that they might discuss how to improve their meetings and make them more successful, and several members spoke. Failure was very frankly confessed, and a new departure already decided on, when ladies were to be admitted, was welcomed. After several short speeches, the chairman referred to a stranger present who might perhaps have something to say, and as he evidently meant me, I got up and recommended perseverance, and if one thing failed the trying of another. This fell in with the sentiments of the meeting, and when we separated I was invited to 'come again.'

(4) *Baptisms in a Presbyterian Church.*

. . . . The baptism of two or three infants took place at the end of the morning service in face of the whole congregation (a large middle and upper class audience). The parties were introduced below the pulpit, and specially addressed on the value of the family in religion, &c. The pastor then came down, and, in a loud voice, baptized each child; and then, turning where he stood, spoke to the congregation, reminding his hearers of their duties, and of what had been promised in their cases also. It was solemnly done, and listened to in the same spirit.

(5) *A favourite Evangelist.*

On Monday I visited the Cannon Street Hotel at 11 o'clock to see what manner of man he is, who can

undoubtedly draw by his preaching people of almost every class. The great hall of the hotel had seats set for about three hundred, all of which were filled, and about one hundred persons stood behind. The audience consisted entirely of clerks and City men; the majority seemingly clerks in a small way. They were most likely all godly people; regular church and chapel goers. Those round me sang the familiar hymns almost without looking at the words, and during the prayers fervent amens were ejaculated occasionally.

After a hymn had been sung the arrangements for the week were explained. The evangelist was to be every night at the Great Assembly Hall in Mile End Road. 'We had the place packed twice yesterday,' he said, 'and in the evening thousands were turned away; but then it was Sunday'; and he added, 'My Sunday market is very strong, but there is apt to be a slump on Monday.'

At 1.15 the preacher began his sermon, and it lasted exactly half an hour. He has a strong voice, and uses gesture freely, most of it very extravagant; walks about, acts, and at times rants terribly. His sermon was full of jokes, which he himself heartily enjoyed. He was preaching on the incident of the woman who asked Jesus to heal her daughter, saying, "It is not meet to throw the children's food to the dogs," &c., and how, by her persistency, she forced Jesus to attend to her, and got Him on her side by her ready tongue. 'God,' he said, 'does not always answer us at once,' He plays with us in fact, because 'He likes us to corner Him with His own word.' When out of the jocular vein, there were passages of genuine eloquence, and there can be no doubt of the man's great power, and his ability to hold and satisfy his audience.

## § 5

## MISSIONS, ETC.

(1) *A Mission Service at the East End.*

. . . . . It was a little white-washed hall, and on Sunday morning was full of working-class men and women, at least one hundred and fifty, of whom twenty sat behind the minister as a choir. In the body of the hall on the left-hand side all were men. The seats had a desk arrangement in front, such as is common in schools; and many of the men had open Bibles before them. On the wall beside them were pegs for their hats. The seats in the centre of the hall were occupied by women, and to the right were men and women together. When I entered a hymn was being sung, and the singing, unaccompanied by any instrument, was good and vigorous. This was succeeded by the reading of a psalm, with a running comment and exposition, very well done and attentively listened to. It was in exceedingly simple language, and the speaker seemed not to be of much higher class than his hearers. In the evening the leader was even of rather lower class than the audience, which was like that of the morning, only smaller. The man had been a soldier, and, in speaking of the coming of Christ and the attitude of watchfulness for it, told how when on guard near Woolwich (I think it was) the 'grand round' would sometimes be made. When this might be (within some hours at any rate), a sentry did not know, and he described how he would put his ear to the ground, and how he could hear the sound of the horses feet, and then how he challenged when they came near—all very graphic. So were we to be ready for the coming of the Lord.

(2) *Service in a Common Lodging-house.*

. . . . . Going down towards the Mile End Road I heard sounds of harmonium and a hymn, and passed through the swing doors of the kitchen of a common lodging-house where a mission service was being conducted. About six well-dressed women, mostly young, and some three men, were seated on the benches near the entrance end of the long room, and extend-



ing about halfway towards the other end where was the usual great coke fire. At each side of the room was a row of tables, and on the wall side of the tables a few men and boys were seated. There was a further group near the fire. I could not see that any of them took the slightest interest in the service; not one of them joined in the hymn which was being sung. A lady played on the harmonium, which no doubt is painfully carried from kitchen to kitchen. After the hymn there came a prayer, and all the while and during the preaching that followed, there was a stream of coming and going, and men were cooking and eating their suppers. The speaker was a quiet young man, and took up his position quite at the door end in order the better to address all present. His text was "The wages of sin is death." It was very poor preaching indeed, and one wondered how anybody could sit and listen to it. A man near me (who was eating fried potatoes off a piece of newspaper), could not restrain a few uncomplimentary comments beneath his breath, with which I felt some sympathy.

(3) *A Mission to the Jews.*

We had received a post-card asking us to call on Saturday afternoon, from 3.30 to 5, when 'we should find a full room, and be able to talk after.' The door was opened by a matronly-looking Jewess, who proved to be the wife of the missionary. The room into which I was ushered was a small one, and was, as had been claimed, full, with twenty-five Jewesses and five Jews. I was given a seat at the top of the room, next to a strange-looking individual with a black beard, who is the most important person in this story. The missionary and another man, who acted as chairman, sat also at the upper end of the room. On his legs was a German, who was addressing those present in Yiddish. He spoke fluently, and with a good deal of gesture; but, with the exception of two Jewesses in the front row, all seemed to hear him with complete apathy, mingled with unconcealed signs of boredom. But the two women were evidently following the speaker closely, and constantly nodded their heads, apparently in consent to his arguments. The German having finished, the black-bearded man was asked to say

a few words. He was a most extraordinarily grotesque person, and it is not easy to give any, even the most remote, conception of his appearance, his speech, his manner, his gestures. He spoke in English, with a voice something between a rook and a corn-crake; but even more astounding than his voice was his accent, which, if reproduced on the stage, would be described as an absurd burlesque of the vilest type of modern cockney speech. The matter was of the usual street-preaching kind, on the lowest level. The Jews probably did not understand a word of it, and they mainly looked profoundly bored. At the end, we Christians sang a hymn in English, out of Moody and Sankey's collection: "I am trusting, I am trusting, Sweetly trusting in His blood." The Jews had no hymn books, and showed no signs of being able to follow. The proceedings closed with a prayer in Yiddish from the missionary, and the audience trooped out, leaving me with the missionary and his wife, and the bearded man. From the conversation that ensued, I gathered that this man was in truth the founder of the mission, twenty-six years ago, and that the present missionary and his wife, were his converts, having 'loved their Saviour,' respectively, twenty-six and twenty-two years. As to present conversions, they said that all those in the front rows at the meeting were really converts; though, owing to persecution, they were not all 'professing Christians.' 'The persecution is terrible,' said the missionary's wife, adding, 'I have been through it, and know what it is.' Asked about relief, she said 'they were very poor, and that what God sends us we give them.' The mission being in financial difficulties, was about to be transferred to a larger organization. The bearded man said he saw signs of a great movement among the Jews, and asserted that this mission had converted thousands! 'You may report,' he said, at the end, 'that they are coming over in thousands.'

(4) *A Quaker Adult School Meeting on Sunday Morning.*

. . . . . There were thirty-five or forty men in the Class at the commencement, and these numbers were fully doubled by the end. The men seemed to have their accustomed places, and vacant seats were left to some

extent for absentees. The chapter to be read was the 55th of Isaiah: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth," &c. We read the whole of this, and most of the 56th chapter, and went twice over the first portion, so that everyone present might read a verse. I gathered that the 54th and 55th chapters had been read last Sunday, so that each verse would be read over several times before it was done with. Perhaps the pace depends on the inherent interest of the passage, and in this case every word was of great value. No remarks were made during the reading, which went verse after verse from man to man, in the order in which we sat. When the reading was finished, and after a short prayer, the man who had promised to open the debate being absent, it was left to any one to take up some verse, or any subject suggested by what we had read, and several spoke in turn—none spoke for long, the president's *only-three-minutes-more bell* never had to be brought into requisition. The remarks were homely expressions of the feelings roused by the language of the texts, continued sometimes so as to drag in the drink question, or the poverty question, or whatever the man's mind was full of; and, in some cases, showed that his mind was chiefly full of himself. The only lengthy exhortation was that of a man who told us that the reading of the words just heard had helped him to win, in a battle with self, as to forgiving his 'own flesh and blood,' by which or by whom he had evidently felt deeply aggrieved. He slowly ground this out. He told us how this person and that had urged this duty upon him, and how he had met their honest and kind advice with refusal and insult, but how at last he had been broken down. I suppose the man's mind was eased by making a clean breast of it all, even in public; but yet the confession seemed out of its proper place, and with a very slight twist might be regarded as self-congratulation, rather than self-condemnation; and that it was in any way the result of our Bible reading was not to be supposed, though, doubtless, the meeting and its customary proceedings gave him an opportunity.

(5) *The Salvation Fortress* is an old Methodist chapel, and the officers live in a small house adjoining. The

captain, who has been here five months, is a tall thin young woman; she had been ill a fortnight ago, and for the past fourteen days her lieutenant had been ill, and so she had been working single-handed. She had a pinched face, with dark rings round the eyes.

This corps is one that has a hard struggle for existence, and without help from headquarters it could not live. The accounts showed that after paying the expenses of the hall, the following amounts had remained for the officers for the past five weeks:—

Week ending Dec. 18, Captain 2s 3d, Lieut. 2s.

Week ending Dec. 25, Captain 10s, Lieut. 10s. (The receipts include 20s from Divisional Officer.)

Week ending Dec. 31, Captain 2s 9d, Lieut. 2s 6d.

Week ending Jan. 7, Captain 8s 10d, Lieut. 8s 10d. (Including 10s from Divisional Officer.)

Week ending Jan. 14, Captain 8s 3d, Lieut. 7s.

The rent of their house is paid by the Divisional Officer, but the corps has to find 16s 6d for the rent of the chapel (payable to headquarters). If they need clothes and ask a grant, it is made them.

The lieutenant was even thinner than the captain, with a very girlish figure; both gave the impression that they were denying themselves the necessaries as well as the luxuries of life, and one could not but be impressed with the self-sacrifice displayed.

(6) *A Day's record at a Mission*—(copied exactly):

“25s was payed to Mr. P \* \* \* \* \* for meat.

2 tins of boiled mutton was used for the dinner.

An appeal was sent to Mr. P \* \* \* \* \* about the boys' guild.

An appeal was sent to Mr. B \* \* \* \* \* about the boys' guild.

3½ quarterns of bread was served to a family, 6d.

2d was spent for a knife-opener and 1d for salt.

4s payed B \* \* \* \* \*.

A tin of mutton was served to Mrs. C \* \* \* \* \*, 1s; paid 6d.

A maid was sent to clean the committee offices next door, 2 hours.

Dustman, 1*d*; hearthstone, 1*d*; blacklead, 1*d*.

4*s* 6*d* repairing urns and kettles.

A chest hospital letter for Victoria Park Hospital.

Soup dinner.—63 children brought tin tickets, 86 children and women paid  $\frac{1}{2}$ *d* each; 3*s* 7*d* taken. 20 dinners were given free, paid for by Mrs. S \* \* \* \* \*, 10*d*.

Milly cooked the dinner. Mrs. S \* \* \* \* \* served it and superintended. Mrs. M \* \* \* \* \* and Mrs. E \* \* \* \* \* helped.

Big girl C \* \* \* \* \* was fitted with skirt, bodice, shoes, for which Mrs. T \* \* \* \* \* will pay 2*s* 6*d*.

A pair of boots was fitted to boy L \* \* \* \* \*.

A quartern loaf was served to a poor family, 5*d*.

8*d* and a loaf of bread was given to an unemployed man for doing some scrubbing for the supt.

A man brought a parcel of children's books, three being given to him.

A letter was sent to Mr. H \* \* \* \* \* about a visit from Mrs. B \* \* \* \* \*."

A mission cleaner was engaged nine and a half hours.

Other days are similar, except that when dinners are not given, the clothing is usually much more prominent. Thus on the following day fifty-seven distinct entries are made of clothing supplied, the names of the recipient, the article and charge for same, being always stated.

## § 6

## OPINIONS

(1) *Religion of the Sick in Hospital, from the Chaplain's point of view.*

The chaplain of the Hospital has spiritual jurisdiction over all the patients except Roman Catholics and Jews, and thus has about five hundred always to attend to. Four services are held in the chapel on Sunday. Communion at 5.50 and 9.20, and morning and evening prayer. These services are attended by members of the staff and convalescent patients; and of the latter the men attend better than the women. The chaplain (who sees, perhaps, more of the men than the women from day to day), attributes the preponderance of females in ordinary Church services to the fact that the parish priest practically never sees the male members of the families (and it is, perhaps, probable that this fact re-acts on the character of the parson). In addition to the services in chapel, a weekly service is held in each of the wards. Out of his flock of five hundred, about thirty on the average are communicants.

Asked how far he found the patients spiritually minded, the chaplain, before replying, said we must bear in mind that 'he saw them at their tenderest' ("The Devil was sick—the Devil a saint would be"), and then went on to say that out of about eight thousand persons he had had under his charge he did not think twelve had professed to be infidels or scoffers; about fifty per cent. would claim to be orthodox Christians. 'Their ideas may be vague, but they seem to understand that they are sinners, and to believe that Christ died to redeem them from their sins.' Of the other fifty per cent. nearly all believe in a Supreme Being, and most have some sort of faith in Jesus Christ either as a divine person or the best of men. Most know the Lord's Prayer. Both men and women seem to pray at times, if not regularly; and they often tell him the words they use. The prayers of the men are usually something after this pattern, 'Our Father' (they nearly all say 'Our Father') 'help me to get well: look after the missus and the kids while I'm away: help

me to get work when I go out.' They seldom ask 'to be shown His will' or 'not to be led into temptation.' They usually sit up in bed to pray; there is the greatest aversion to kneeling down.

The Dissenters are more strict as to religious observance than the nominal Church people, but the Church of England is better known and more popular than the Nonconformist bodies. The Roman Catholics and Jews are nearly all observers of their religious duties, but appear to be really less religious than the others. . . . . A very large proportion of those who come in from injury in drunken brawls are Irish Roman Catholics. Residence in the hospital is an influence for good on all.

(2) The chaplain of another Hospital has always seven hundred patients under his charge and about seven thousand pass through his hands in the course of a year. For these, besides the Sunday services in the church, he and his assistant hold between sixty and seventy services of fifteen minutes each in the wards during the week. In addition, each patient is visited, talked with and, if they wish it, prayed with once a week. He has held this position and performed this work for twenty years, and what he says as to the spiritual condition of the patients agrees closely with what we heard from the chaplain already quoted. Nearly all believe in a God, and of the few avowed infidels whom he has seen, scarcely any, he says, have stuck to their principles in face of death. In a vague and hazy way most of them may be described as Christians; that is, there is a general tendency to 'suppose that it is all true,' but those who have thought the matter out, or have any definite convictions, are few and far between; they have for the most part put religion deliberately out of their lives and dislike to be reminded of it. They can only be reached through their emotions, and this is the justification of ritualistic and sensational methods. It is, he says, the greatest exception for his patients ever to have been brought in contact with the clergy of their parish, especially as regards the Evangelicals, and on speaking on this matter at clerical meetings has been told that

London is too big for visitation. And he thinks that the majority of the clergy have given it up as a hopeless task.

(3) *The opinions of an old Lady District Visitor.*

Mrs. S \* \* \* \* is a well preserved old lady of seventy-eight, and for forty years has visited the same group of low streets, in connection with the Baptist chapel, of which she is a member. For the past two years, owing to infirmity, she has had to give it up, but she used to visit from house to house, and believes that this is the only way to reach the people. She appears to have had tickets to distribute and to have used them as introductions. 'That was the silver key for me to open the door. If I had tickets I could get in,' and then afterwards she was able to get in without tickets. Subsequently, she entered into a defence of her mode of relief. 'People,' she said, 'charged her with being indiscriminate. Well, if you see a child eating the paste required for making match boxes, can you refuse to give in such a case? If this is indiscriminate, then the Lord Jesus Christ was the most indiscriminate, for He fed the people without asking any questions.' She, however, never gave money, for some people could not be trusted to buy a loaf of bread with it.

In the low streets she visited, three out of five couples are living unmarried. Some would openly confess it; but they did not like any allusions to be made to the subject at the mothers' meetings. When she asked why they did not marry, she often found that the man had a wife living away from him or the woman a husband.

Drinking habits among these people are bad. The old beer-houses had grown into great places, and are supported by the inhabitants of the district and not by passers by. If you want to see a gala day go when someone is to be buried who has met a sudden death. Then the people all turn out and the public-houses are full. No sorrow is to be seen on the faces, it is a regular holiday.

The influence of the churches is very small. In these low streets, where she used to visit from house to house, hardly any attended any place of worship. Even of the



children none went to Sunday school, nor their mothers to the mothers' meetings, being a grade too low for that. Those who do attend the mothers' meetings are mostly widows and old women. In one street she asked in every house as to Bibles, and found only one; and that was dusty. In the better streets the influence is greater; in one she knew at least fifteen who attend a place of worship. From these streets the children all go to Sunday school.

## § 7

## SUNDRY EXTRACTS

(1) *A Church Army Home.*

. . . . . Last year three hundred boys passed through the home, and of them the Army claims that about half were successfully dealt with, while about half turned out failures. A success means that a boy has been placed in a situation and, as far as is known, has kept it; but the boys are not closely followed up, or placed under any tutelage. This is only one out of many of these homes for boys. They are supposed to be admitted only from sixteen to nineteen years of age, but are actually from fourteen to twenty-one. They come from all over London, being sent to the homes from headquarters; some are found by the officers in the streets, others are sent by magistrates as first offenders, and a few come of their own accord. The vast majority have been in moral trouble of some kind, and are of a rough character, but now and then there is a respectable lad among them. Many are country born and often have been in London only a few days, having perhaps tramped up. They may remain in the home for four months at longest, but the average time is not over one month; a few are dismissed for misconduct in the home, but otherwise nearly all are found places before the month is out. If the work lies near

enough they often remain longer as boarders. There is never the smallest difficulty in finding employment, there being a number of friendly employers who draw upon the Church Army in this way.

While in the home the boys are employed in wood-chopping at the current rate of wages. They are charged 6s a week for their keep, and of any surplus, receive half as pocket money, while the other half is retained till they go out. They work till 5 o'clock each day and are then free to go out till 9, and they usually do so. There is a gymnasium for them in the Home.

There is morning and evening service daily in the chapel, and once a week there is a special service conducted by an officer sent from headquarters. The boys are also taken twice on Sunday to the parish church. As to all this religious effort the opinion of the superintendent, very frankly expressed, was that 'it did not do them a bit of good.' The time is too short, he said, you cannot do much in that direction with those who have lived in the thick of bad things so long. 'What we do,' he added, 'is to give them just another chance in life; but we should do better if we could keep them longer.'

(2) *A Poor Board School in Bethnal Green.*

. . . . There were forty-eight of the boys at dinner—poor, thin, anæmic children—many of them very ragged; only three had collars. Chubby faces are scarce in this school. The dinner, a charitable provision, consisted of soup and bread liberally supplied, the average being about two and a half helpings for each child. The master has not made any recent inquiries, but he thinks things are no better than they were in 1884, and at that time a special inquiry was made, and it proved that among the boys there were ninety-seven families living in one room, with an average of five to a room, and 163 families living in two rooms, with an average of seven in family. At the same time, it was recorded (on the statement of the children themselves) that, out of about 230, thirty had come that day without breakfast, and fifty-eight without dinner, and that a larger number more often did so than not. Their food was

reported as consisting mainly of dry bread, bread and dripping, bread and butter, or bread and fish, with tea. Half the boys bring food (mostly bread) to school with them, and eat it in the playground or school rooms. Boots are an incessant difficulty; many of the children really cannot march owing to the way they are shod, and the sight of naked bodies through the ragged clothing is frequent. A large proportion of the mothers are at work; working as well as, or instead of, the men; they are mostly employed in matchbox making.

In spite of the continued evil physical conditions, the master notices a great improvement in the morals and manners of the children now, compared with former years. They are infinitely less savage, lawless, and unruly than when the school was first opened, and, indeed, are now perfectly amenable to discipline. This is not due to the influence of the home, but to the fact that all the present children have begun their school life as infants, whereas the earlier specimens came straight from the streets at a later age. In the early days the slightest rebuke brought out a torrent of the filthiest language. Nothing of the kind is now heard during school hours, though in play-time the language is still very bad. And the improvement goes further than this. In the earlier days the closets (especially those of the girls) were one mass of obscene writing from top to bottom; they would even mount on chairs to reach a vacant space: now it is the rarest thing for a word to appear; and if one boy or girl writes anything of the kind, another will rub it out. Thus the influence of the school is certainly very good, but, unfortunately, the attendance is under 70 per cent., and doubtless many children are not on the roll at all.

But, though there is this moral improvement, the master of this school does not yet see any mental change. The children remain dull and difficult to teach. This he attributes partly to heredity, but still more to environment, and especially to deficient nourishment. They almost all leave school as soon as they can, but, as a rule, try to break away from their fathers' occupations (of costering, fish-curing, and so forth) in order to go as van-boys, with a view to employment as carmen, or

on the railways. Failing in this, many drift back to the streets, and others go as soldiers.

The influence of the religious agencies has been of the slightest. None of the people (say both the masters and the caretaker of this school) go to church or chapel unless it be for the loaves and fishes. The caretaker met a woman in the street at 8.30 a.m., when the following conversation occurred: 'Why, Mrs. Jones, you're out early.' 'Yes, sir, I'm going to church.' 'Going to church?' 'Yes, sir, I've lost my mangle.' *Se non è vero, è ben trovato.*

(3) *A free children's dinner in Bethnal Green.*

I met the superintendent at the mission at 1 o'clock, when the children, of whom there were 233, had just taken their places. They ranged from five to thirteen years of age, but most were little. Boys slightly preponderated. With the exception of a few small girls, all were poorly dressed and ill-nourished, but none were bare-footed. In Bethnal Green, however poor the children are, some foot covering is worn; it may be in holes, and simply absorb wet, but something they must have. One boy I noticed, as they filed out, had a pair of ladies' dress slippers, with high heels and pointed toes; they had to be tied on across the ankle.

Besides the superintendent and an old caretaker, there were five or six girls of thirteen to fifteen to serve the food, and on them all the work fell. The dinner consisted of thick soup (supplied *ad lib.*), with two slices of bread, followed by a slice of currant pudding put into the hands of each child as it left the building.

After grace was sung, the distribution of the soup began, it being ladled out of the copper into enamelled jugs by the caretaker, and taken round to the children by the girls. This took a few minutes, and whilst it was being done the impatient children were rapping the tables with their spoons, making a terrific noise. Gradually the spoons were diverted to their proper use, and some twenty minutes were occupied in consuming the food. Tickets for these dinners are distributed by teachers at elementary schools, and mission workers.

(4) *A Baby Ragged School.*

At the crèche, on the first floor, about twenty-four children, mostly infants, were established, in charge of a motherly woman. The place is well appointed, with cots and swings and low tables, and there is a small kitchen adjoining, where food is prepared. The rooms are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. The babies are brought sometimes at three weeks or the month, and had even come when only a fortnight old. In the schoolrooms, on the upper floor, about a hundred children, boys and girls, were present, in the charge of three teachers. The eldest would be about seven years old, the youngest about three. Most were undoubtedly from poor homes; pale, listless children, with the dull look that comes from a diet mainly of bread. Some of them bore signs of neglect on their persons, as well as ragged clothes. They attend well, the percentage being ninety-two to ninety-six. The school hours are perhaps the happiest they enjoy.

(5) *A Child Nurse.*

. . . . . In the next house to which the Jewish rabbi took us, we found a woman lying ill of consumption. She was a foreigner, and had been ill for six months. She lay on the bed with loose wraps thrown over her, the bed clothes being thrown back; and the heat was what she chiefly complained of. There was some hope of getting her away to a hospital in a few days. The neighbours were doing much to look after her. Sitting at the bedside was a little English girl, a stranger, who had by some means discovered the sick woman, and who had constituted herself head nurse; and it appeared that the night before she had not returned to her home until between 10 and 11. She was a girl of thirteen or so. . . . .

## § 8

## STREET SCENES

(1) *Sleeping in the open air.*

. . . . . Sleeping out of doors is one of the features of Whitechapel. It is a centre for common lodging-houses and shelters. Destitutes from all sides are drawn there. Many would rather sleep out of doors than indoors in the warm weather. If they are without visible means of subsistence the police can charge them; if they have a few pence, as they generally have, they can only be moved on from door to door, and finally will move no further and are left sleeping on the doorstep. They also sleep during the day on such seats as are provided. These people are covered with vermin and cannot be touched with impunity.

(2) *Description of a low bit in Stepney.*

. . . . . We went East along Brook Street, colour dark blue; rough, poor, many common lodging-houses, but no brothels. Then further East past the Friends' Meeting House to Cosh's Buildings, which fill the space between School-house Street and Collingwood Street, where Dunstan's Place used to be, and where that saint might well have seized the Devil by the nose. Here there are now three four-storeyed blocks. The centre one is very bad. Shrieks of a woman, who was being ill-treated, resounded as we passed through, and there was much excitement, all the women looking out of their houses; ragged, dirty, square-jawed women, and one was saying, 'She deserved a good deal, but I hope he wont go too far.'

Further on comes Causeway Court, a place not marked on the map, with drains choked, everything overflowing into the court, and all windows broken—and so on and so on. But all is not bad; in Weston Place—a *cul-de-sac* of three-storeyed houses, rough and dismal looking, with ragged children playing about—a mite of eight or nine years was on her knees scrubbing the steps and the flags in front of the house. Dipping a rag and brush into the pail beside her as if she were

fifteen, she called out, 'Look, mother, aint I getting it clean?'

(3) *Prostitution in Whitechapel.*

. . . . Many of the women are from a distance and come and go a good deal. After being herself absent for a few weeks the mission woman was struck by the number of new faces. Not a little 'poncing' is done. The bully follows closely on the heels of the pair, and asks what the stranger is doing in his room—a row, with robbery, follows, and the stranger is kicked out; or, the man having parted with some money in advance, finds himself 'bilked' and left alone and is hustled out by the neighbours. Those who enter rarely leave with money or valuables upon them. . . . .

(4) *A Friend to the Cats.*

. . . . . A woman came along with a basket on her arm full of cats' meat, which she distributed to the cats as she passed. 'Do you see that woman?' said our companion. 'She was a prostitute and still lives in a brothel, but she goes daily round the district feeding the cats.' In appearance she was a frowsy, debauched, drunken-looking creature. . . . .

(5) *The pleasure of a funeral.*

There had been a fire with terrible loss of life: mother and eight children burnt, and the same day the husband had died in the infirmary of consumption. The funeral was by public subscription and was just starting. The band was playing the 'Dead March,' and was preceded by a number of men and children. The roads were blocked with people, the day being observed as a holiday; falling in with the usual habits of the people on a Monday in these parts. There were four hearses with the coffins, four mourning carriages, plumed horses, and mutes on foot with flowing crape bands, and handkerchiefs with deep black borders were conspicuous in the hands of the mourners. There were also three omnibuses prepared to take passengers to Plaistow (the burial place) and back for 1s, and each was crammed with women, and there were two hansom cabs and a few carts, and a respectful crowd of people looking on, with

thirty policemen to keep order. But all was very orderly. Everybody on their best behaviour, in their Sunday clothes, washed and dressed for the occasion.

‘It is wonderful how much they think of a funeral,’ said our conductor. ‘There will be many wishing they too had been burnt, to have such a turn-out as this.’ ‘A man may beat his wife, and ill-treat her so that she dies of it, but if he gives her a good funeral he will be forgiven by the women of the neighbourhood, who say, “but he can’t have been so bad, poor man, look what a handsome burial he gave her.”’ Even the poorest will pay £8 or £10 for a burial and then starve the week after.

[We may insert here the story of a dying girl who belonged to a club at Millwall. Her friends in the club, who were told that there was no hope of her recovery, joined together before her death to buy a wreath for her coffin; they were exceedingly anxious that she should live long enough to see it, which happily she did, and, by permission of the doctor, they went with it in a body to her room. She was immensely pleased and touched.]

(6) *The Market of the Fancy.*

. . . . . Passing along Bethnal Green Road in an omnibus, coming home on Sunday morning after attending service further East, I stumbled on the ‘Fancy Market’ of Sclater Street at its height. Not only was Sclater Street itself blocked full with men, but there were thousands in Bethnal Green Road: a great crowd. Here were the men. I got off the ‘bus and walked among them, listened to the harangues of the bookies, bought a racing tip for 3d, and watched a corn-cutter operate on the foot of a young man laid out on the box of his vehicle, while all around were the buyers and sellers of dogs, fowls, pigeons and other pets. . . . .

(7) *Part of Soho.*

. . . . . The west end of Broad Street might be part of Whitechapel. Jewish faces and shops; hatless children; tousel-haired women; men with bundles of trousers wrapped in cloths, and hands of tailors as they draw the thread seen above the window curtains; sense of crowding and dirt. Work-shops and living rooms built up behind the houses. . . . .



SYLLABUS OF THE ENTIRE WORK



# Life and Labour of the People in London

(CHARLES BOOTH)

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